AKHAND HINDUSTAN

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Preface

THIS book contains several articles written and speeches delivered by me since 1938. Though varying in the aspects which they deal with, they are all the outcome of an effort to study and present the unity which runs through the history, culture and life of India.

This publication, I trust, will be useful to the students of Indian unity which is not only to be felt, but visualised, worked for and, if need be, fought for.

K. M. MUNSHI

Bombay, January, 1942.

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I

Appearing the Disruptionists

SOME friends have written to me that in organising opinion in favour of the inviolability of India, the enemies of her integrity will be strengthened. This argument involves the position that if you appease these intending disruptors, India will never be in danger of disruption. I thought we had seen the last of Neville Chamberlain's doctrine when he quitted the British premiership. If anything will strengthen the Disruptionists, it will be the supineness and gullibility of those who stand for Akhand Hindustan. The creed of disruption has thriven on appeasement so far, and unless Indians put their foot down, the country will be cleft into bits before they know what is being done.

Mr. Amery's present of a veto to the Disruptionists is more than a danger signal; it is the first round in the struggle. If India goes under

in this round, we will never recover. The British Government must be made to reconsider this policy. They must admit that, war or no war, they will not bar political progress at the behests of the Disruptionists.

Mr. Amery started with 'India first'; then, frightened by the Disruptionists, he shrunk back. The overwhelming mass of Indians who are opposed to disruption are entitled to know whether the British are going to stand by Indian unity. If they are not, they have no claim upon the co-operation of any Indian worth the name. They may continue to make any nominal changes they like in the Government of India. They may adorn their powerless Committees with any names they choose. But India as a whole will remain apathetic.

If the British want Indian opinion to be mobilised for the war,—which is now fast being realized as a war as much for the self-existence of India as for the self-existence of Britain,—the British must prove that they also stand by the integrity of India and that they are not going to barter away her political future for temporary diplomatic advantages.

Those who believe in appeasing the Disruptionists should read the statement of the Bengal

Provincial Congress Committee submitted to the Dacca Riots Inquiry Committee. It makes painful reading. It would be unfair to prejudge the findings of the Committee on the actual incidents of these riots, but the speeches of the Premier and other responsible Muslims in Bengal, cited in the Report, bespeak an attitude of mind which no appeasement could satisfy. The Premier of Bengal, in whose hands are entrusted the destinies of several millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, from time to time delivered himself of the following priceless gems :—

> If the Moslems united and worked as a team there was every likelihood of their ruling again this country.

* * *

> I am not afraid of anyone but "Allah" and can face 22 crores of Hindus without moving a muscle. I have faith in God and I am confident that in spite of their large numbers I will put them down. It is the Moslems alone who have a future. The "Kaffir" has no future because he is so uncertain of his future. The "Kaffir" has no future life at all.

* * *

> I am convinced that the Muslims will be shown (in the census) as something near 30% and the Hindus a little over 60% of the population in Bengal. What else could happen when lawyers, scientists, professors, lecturers, landlords, merchants, Brahmins and non-Brahmins and all the medley of castes and

sub-castes have deliberately combined to tell lies and make false statements in order to inflate their figures?

Mr. Suhrawardy, one of his ministerial colleagues, at the Bhairab Conference, exhorted the Mussalmans to "organise under the Muslim League banner and wrest power from caste Hindus." The Hon. Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin, Home Minister, opened a Pakistan Park on a site alleged to belong to a private Hindu owner without his consent.

The Bengal Ministerial organ, *The Star of India*, stated as follows:

> In every nook and corner of Bengal the patience of the Muslims has reached the breaking point. The time has come to show the little rats that the lion is not dead—only sleeping. Even the so-called big men among the Hindus have lost their mental balance and come out in the true colour of the unscrupulous communalist. They will all have their answer. They will see to whom Bengal belongs. They shall be taught the lessons they need.

In *The Azad*, another Ministerial organ, a poem was published in its issue of 10th March '41, where the victorious soldiers under the banner of the Muslim League were asked to march against idolatrous Hindus. The poem then exhorts the victorious soldiers to "spill such blood as required." It says, "We want Pakistan, the pro-

per division. If that cannot be achieved by words, the Mussalmans are not afraid to use swords and spears." One of the verses runs as follows :

> Come quickly—break down Lath-manath.
> If you want freedom, Burn! Burn! Burn!
> The Jatu-Griha (Hindu homes) and let
> all trouble end.

The British Governor who has the discretionary power to control his Ministers, to whom is entrusted the task of seeing that peace and tranquillity of the Province are not disturbed, sits silent, a party to these vagaries by his refusal to exercise the power that he possesses. But it is no use blaming the British Governor. He has got to be true to his own country first and foremost.

Coming to a recent event, at the the Muslim League Conference at Sultankot in Sind, where Mr. G. M. Syed, one of the ex-Ministers of Sind presided, an Urdu song was sung which when translated contains the following :

> Let there be in Pakistan the separate centre
> of Islam,
> We shall not, in Pakistan, have to look at faces
> of non-Muslims.
> The abode of the Muslim nation will brighten
> up only when in the Pakistan there remain
> no idolatrous thorns.

> They (Hindus) whose function is to be slaves
> have no right to participate in Government.
> Nowhere have they succeeded in governing.

What shall we do then, when sentiments like these are preached by men in authority and influence? Shall we humbly remonstrate with them? Shall we go down on our bended knees and appeal to them to behave as responsible men? How shall we appease them? Shall we congregate in our temples and mosques and churches and pray to the Almighty that he may, in His divine mercy, be pleased to vouchsafe to such men a little of gentleness and goodwill?

Gandhiji has lived for Hindu-Muslim unity for the last quarter of a century. In pursuit of it he has sacrificed his reputation with a section of the Hindus, who blame him for letting them down. But his intentions have been misrepresented. His overtures have been spurned. His views have been distorted. He is being reviled in the disruptionist papers as the greatest enemy of Islam. His life is being threatened.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, that noble patriot, an authority on Islam, one of the greatest of our Nationalists, is ridiculed for wanting a united India on the basis of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Will appeasement secure what the efforts of

the Apostle of Non-violence and the greatest Mussalman in the country failed to achieve?

The follies of the timid optimist never die. They only will kill his cause.

Friendliness comes by mutual forbearance and mutual respect. It is not born out of a wedlock of bluff and appeasement.

When those standing for the unity of India win the respect of the disruptionists by their fearless advocacy of Akhand Hindustan, friendliness and mutual understanding will follow, as day follows the night.

II

Akhand Hindustan

IN a house infested with ghosts, the terrified residents every night heard an unearthly voice say: "I am coming, I am coming!"

The residents were frightened out of their wits. They got Brahmins to perform Puja. They took every vow which they knew. They paid large fees to professional ghost-doctors.

But there was no change. Every night the unearthly voice was heard at the stroke of twelve, 'I am coming, I am coming.' And the residents, with their heads hidden in their bed sheets, trembled with fright.

One night, one of the victims of this ghostly attention became impatient. When the ghost said, 'I am coming!' he flung away the cover, lit the lamp, and shouted back: 'Come, and do your worst!'

The ghost thereupon promptly left the house for good.

We are being told now and again that India must be divided. We are threatened with dire consequences if we do not agree. Like the impatient resident of the ghost infested house, there can be one reply. That reply has recently been given by Rajendra Babu:

India was one, is one, and will remain one.

There are six good reasons why India will and must remain one and indivisible. Firstly, the Muslims will not accept the division; secondly, the Hindus will never agree to it; thirdly, Nationalist India does not want it; fourthly, Indian States, on the whole, will never submit to it; fifthly, the British will not be a party to it; sixthly, the world conditions will not permit it.

The Muslims in the bulk will never seek the partition of India. Wherever they are, they are the sons of the common motherland, India, not of any part of it. No Muslim, as no Hindu, no Christian, and no Sikh, looks upon any Province as his homeland. Political and economic considerations, which bind everyone to the whole country, bind him also. Equally with others, his past, present and future are interwoven with the fabric of life of which the base is the whole country.

That is why, out of the four Muslim majority

Provinces, the ministry of North Western Frontier, though suspended, is national; that of Sind is equally so; those in the Punjab and Bengal are Coalitionist, consisting of Hindus and Muslims who do not believe in dividing India. Out of these four provincial ministries none favours partition. And these Provinces, which are expected to constitute Pakistan, comprise no less than 45 millions of Muslims.

That leaves about 20 millions of Muslims in the Hindu majority provinces of British India. The sentiment that India is the common motherland of Hindus and Muslims is so genuine that these Muslims will refuse to be foreigners in their own homes. And the rest whose vision is not blurred by a hatred of Hindus will see in united India a power, a strength and a glory which must open out greater prospects of an ampler life for every Indian, than in the mutually antagonistic countries created in the interest of religious fanaticism.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, the well-known Momin leader in an interview said:

> The Momins of India comprising over 50 millions of Muslims, i.e., nearly half of the entire Muslim population of India, do not at all recognize the Muslim League as the representative of the political or any other interest of the Momins..The Momins

have a separate organization of their own, namely the All-India Momin Conference..which has long repudiated and contested the Muslim League claim to be the sole representative body of Muslim India and disapproved and condemned its Pakistan scheme as harmful to the interests of India, the motherland of the Momins.

Mr. Syed Habibur Rahman, President of the All-Bengal Krishak Proja Samiti said sometime back :

> When Muslims came to India they adopted this land as their country. They built a new nation and created an Indian *lingua franca* in the form of Urdu and Hindi....A new culture and a new civilization grew up by the mixture of the Hindus and Muslims. The two communities have very little that is not common. A majority of the Mussalmans in India are in fact bones of the bones of Hindus. ....The nation must be regarded above communities. Everywhere national rights and interests are harmonised with communal rights and interests. It is deplorable this is not the case in India because of the policy of the Muslim League.

Mr. Mahomed Yusuff Shareef, ex-Minister of C. P., presiding over the South Indian Anti-Separation Conference, said recently :

> The division of India into Muslim and Hindu states instead of pacifying and strengthening India will create an internal cauldron eternally on the boil, both with passionate recriminations and internecine wars; and how long will the independence of such a country last? No, in the division

of India there is no salvation either for the country as a whole or for any community. The more India thinks in terms of separate communities the more will mutual suspicions be accentuated.

Mr. Mahomedbhoy Rowjee, a leader of the Ismaili Khoja community, says:

It has become therefore all the more unfortunate that the Pakistan theory should be allowed to go unchallenged at the hands of responsible Muslim leaders of the country. Responsible and cultured Muslims of India have realised by this time that the theory of Pakistan is a counsel of despair and if adopted it will spell disaster for the whole Muslim community. In short it will be a political suicide for the whole country to adopt this vague theory.

There is also the important factor of the economic interdependence of Hindus and Muslims throughout the country, which cannot be destroyed without doing great injury to the material interests of the Mussalmans. In trade and commerce, Hindu bankers finance Muslim business; Muslim firms have Hindu partners. In many trades and manufactures, processes are carried out in parts, one by the Hindu and the other by the Mussalman. A majority of the workers of the A.I.S.A. which is being run under the directions of Gandhiji, are Mussalmans. In many places artisans are Muslim, the financiers and distributors, Hindu. In many

villages, agriculturists are Hindu, distributors, Muslim. The internal economy of hundreds of villages rests on the co-operative work of both communities. A disruption of this interdependence will be a disaster.

The Sikhs will not allow the partition of India. The Indian Christians are all nationalists to the core. Dr. V. K. John, President of the All-India Federation of Indian Christians, said recently at Trichinopoly :

> The Indian Christians as a community are opposed to the scheme of Pakistan or any division of India into different entities.

Popular aspirations will never permıt India to be cut up as so much area, and nothing more. The sufferings, which nationalists have undergone, the traditions which they have built up, the work that they have done have reared a fabric which will be stronger with every attempt to tear or to weaken it.

Gandhiji, the embodiment of Indian Nationalism, has already expressed himself in unequivocal terms :

> There is a message I should like to reach the ears of every Mussalman. India cannot win Independence if enght or more crores of Mussalmans are opposed to it. But I cannot believe that all of them are so opposed, until it is proved to me by the vote

of every adult Mussalman. Let them declare that they want to have their political salvation apart from that of the Hindus. India is a poor country full of Hindus and Mussalmans and others staying in every corner of it. To divide it into two is worse than anarchy. It is vivisection which cannot be tolerated—not because I am a Hindu, for I am speaking from this platform as representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all else. But I will say to them, 'Vivisect me before you vivisect India. You shall not do what even the Moghuls, who ruled over India for over two centuries, did not do'. What I have said about the Muslims applies equally to Sikhs. If 30 lakhs of Sikhs will obstruct Indian Independence, we shall deal with them non-violently. Non-violent Swaraj cannot be won except by non-violence. There are other obstacles too imposed by the existence of an alien power. But we must restrain every nerve to achieve communal peace. Islam means peace. That peace cannot be confined to the Muslims. It must mean peace for the whole world.*

Again, he stated :

As a man of non-violence I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent

Harijan, September 22, 1940.

to such a doctrine is for me a denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that the God of the Quran is also the God of the Gita, and that we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same God. I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion.†

Akhand Hindustan is a living reality, which no man in his senses dare trifle with.

There cannot be any parley on the question of integrity of India. There can be no compromise on the basis of its disruption. No coercion, no calamity, no slavery, however oppressive will make us agree to such vivisection.

From Amarnath to Rameswar, from Dwarka to Kalighat, the land is one and indivisible. It is sanctified by the sacrifice of Indians of thirty centuries. It is the shrine at which our gods and fathers have worshipped. It is the hope of India's sons; it will remain such till the end of time. Its inviolability is the first article of their faith here, their salvation hereafter.

Whoever seeks to part what has thus been joined, will have to walk over the dead bodies of millions of Indians.

And even then, India will remain one and indivisible.

†*Harijan*, April 13, 1940.

III

The Spirit of Isa

THE songs of Kathiawar still ring with the name of Isa, a Muslim hero in Kathiawar.

The Sumra of Sindh coveted the beautiful daughter of a Jat convert to Islam. In the fight which ensued between him and the Muslims, over a thousand of the latter were killed, and the rest sought the aid of the Paramaras. Hundreds of Mussalman Jats and Hindu Paramaras laid down their lives side by side for the honour of a Mussalman maid.

On the hill of Mandava, two men lay mortally wounded, one Isa, a Muslim, and his friend, a Hindu. The Mussalman, in his last moments, saw his blood flowing out in a stream to mingle with that of his Hindu friend. But he was a loyal friend. He respected his religious feelings. He did not want his Mussalman blood to pollute his friend's Hindu blood at the moment of death. As he lay dying, with trembling hands, he built a

little ridge of dust between them two to divert the stream of his own blood.

The Paramara saw this last act of friendliness, but could not brook the spirit of estrangement which lay behind it. With dying breath he shouted, "Isa! Remove the ridge. Let us not remain separate even in death!"

Pakistan is the negation of the spirit of Isa.

Whatever its political aspects, Pakistan is a grave danger to the cultural and social synthesis which Hindus and Muslims have evolved in this country during the last seven hundred years.

Pakistan is the extreme outpost of communal isolationism.

The Muslim Disruptionist dislikes all common forms of conduct which emphasize national unity. If I sing Bande Mataram, my friend, the Muslim Disruptionist, feels hurt. If I call a school by its Sanskrit name, Vidya Mandir, it is offensive to him. If I salute a National Flag, it disturbs him. If I try to evolve a national language by using Hindustani, which both of us understand, he wants that we should speak only Urdu, which I find difficult to understand. It makes no difference to him that outside the North, his Urdu is only a lame form of Hindustani.

This is not enough. The claim of the Muslim Disruptionist is that his is not a religious mino-

rity, but a rival nation. Being a nation, he must have a land to rule over. India, therefore, according to him, should be so divided that his co-religionists may have a homeland of the faithfuls, a Pakistan.

If the Muslims as a religious minority confine their ambition to the safeguarding of their interests—which normally would consist in freedom to pursue one's own faith, —nationalism based on secular interests will express itself through forms of conduct common with the majority. But if they insist on turning themselves into a nation, that is, a people with a land and government of their own; if they insist on breaking themselves away, at any cost, from the rest of us in search of a new national home; if the Muslim minority cannot reconcile itself to working with a Hindu majority even on a federal central government, a non-Muslim minority cannot be expected to submit to a majority rule of Muslims in Pakistan.

In the Punjab there are several districts like Kangra, Hissar, and others where the Hindus and Sikhs constitute 51% to 91%. The Hindus form a solid block of more than 50% of the population in a band running throughout the whole of Bengal from the districts of Murshidabad, Malda,

and Dinapur on the north west to Bakarganj, Naokhali and Chittagong on the south-east. These parts of the two Provinces will have to be sliced out and added to the Hindu Provinces. The present provinces, Bengal and the Punjab, therefore, must be subdivided into Hindu and Muslim divisions.

But there are taluks with a Muslim majority in a predominantly Hindu District, and taluks with a Hindu majority in a Muslim district. A district has its corporate life. It has a collectorate, a local board, a school board and so on. If a religious minority is to be set up as a separate nation there would be no justification for creating "Sudeten" areas. In any division of India into Hindu and Muslim India, therefore, the taluka must be taken as the unit.

That may create some difficulty. There may be a Muslim Taluka in a Hindu district or districts. Or, there may be a Muslim village in a Hindu taluka.

There are two alternatives. Hindu and Muslim India each may consist of a homogeneous block and islands dotted over the other block. Or, the Muslims of Ratnagiri, the Borahs of Godhra may have to be transplanted to the Muslim districts of the Punjab, and its Sikh and Hindu population

settled in Maharashtra and Gujarat. The Khojas and Cutchi Memons of Bombay may perhaps have to change places with the Hindus of N.W.F.

The States might present some slight difficulty. A State may have to be treated as a Hindu or Muslim, either by population or by its ruler. If it is judged by population, Kashmir is a Muslim State and Hyderabad, a Hindu State; if by the ruler, *vice versa.* The only solution of the difficulty would be to exchange the populations or rulers. The Kashmiri Pandit will then bask in the southern sun among the Telugus, and the Moplas will float in the boat houses on the Jhelum.

The process of migration, under this supreme urge to find a national home, will—one may anticipate— be carried out with the joy and abandon of a great religious festival. The Kashmiri Pandits from the north and the Moplas from the south will start from their respective homes with their belongings in gaily decorated special trains, singing new national anthems, looking forward to the delights of their own lands of promise. It will be like the migration of a Vaishnava bhakta, on his shuffling off this mortal coil, to the joys of Goloka, where Krishna sports with Radha and Laxmi in unending Rasa.

In the meantime the Hindus and Muslims in their new homelands will have settled down to orderly existence. Once the great Pakistan solution is arrived at, communal journals will become doves of peace, only cooing fraternal love. Hindu-Muslim riots will be a half forgotten memory of neolithic times.

Having accomplished this transplantation, a Pakistan government will begin to function presumably from Lahore, with its independent legislature, its army and finances. The Hindu government, we will say, will function from Delhi with a similar apparatus.

The Pakistan, being an independent government, must look after its own defences. It will have an Afghan frontier on one side and the Hindu frontier on the other. In order to protect itself against foreign inroads, perhaps the Pakistan Government may build a Maginot line on the North-Western Frontier. I dare say the Hindu Government may like to have a Maginot line of its own cutting across the Punjab to defend Hindu India from the dangers of the North West. A customs line between Hindu and Muslim India will, of course, become necessary.

The Eastern Pakistan consisting of the Muslim districts of Bengal and Assam may join the

Western Pakistan in a federation or may like independence.

As internecine wars, by the very nature of our hypothesis, are ruled out, Commissions of very competent Hindus and Muslims will have to plan out and supervise the fixing of boundaries and the exchange of population. Compensation for the property of the migrating people will have also to be ascertained. In order to accomplish this result without acrimony or strife, a tribunal of appeal will have to be set up to decide disputes. The Federal Court may come in handy. Perhaps the Chief Justice of India, a neutral, presumably an Englishman, will be then the umpire.

Inspite of having been torn from their ancestral homes and age-long neighbourhood, traditions and associations, we must assume, the people of Pakistan, to wit, the Pathans, the Punjabis, the Khojas, Cutchi Memons and the Borahs of Bombay and the Moplas of Madras, out of their religious faith, will at once evolve that self-conscious unity of sentiment, tradition and modes of conduct, without which the collective will of a Nation simply cannot exist.

The Muslim Nation once formed, one must take it, there will be no more internal jealousies. No more differences among Sunnis, Shiahs or

Wahabis; there will be only Paks of the Pakistan. The Southerners will naturally proclaim themselves the blue blooded Aryas of Aryavarta.

For settlement of neighbourly differences and for deciding policies of defence, one or more standing commissions of Hindus and Muslims will work for months, learning to adjust differences without breaking heads. Customs, extradition and such sundry other matters will require permanent co-operation between the two Indias. If the Frontier is likely to create danger to both Indias, there may have to be a joint military command and mutually agreed budgetary provisions on both sides to apportion military expenditure. Possibly Hindu and Muslim armies may have to be ready jointly to defend the Afghan Maginot.

But the unexpected may happen, as it does in all schemes of men and mice, however well devised.

Suppose, for instance, some irresponsible fanatics on either side set their face against one of the processes outlined above. Suppose some Hindu or Muslim leaders dig their toes in and stand forth for a united Nation and raise the flag of *Akhand Hindustan.* They may collect a sufficient following to be able to lead a strong movement; some people, under

their influence, may refuse to leave their ancestral surroundings. The movement, suppose, decides to oppose the forces of Law and Order. Some foolish sentimentalists may resolve to die rather than disrupt their Motherland. The Disruptionists will then have to think out an elaborate scheme of coercing these recalcitrant elements.

The Disruptionists may appeal to British bayonets to help them to partition India. But perhaps the bayonets may not be available. More likely they will hate to disrupt the unity which it had been to their interest to help to build up. The only alternative thereupon would have to be a long and bitter struggle between the Disruptionist and the Unionist.

A tornado will then sweep over the country. Every man's hand will be against his brother's. Every hamlet, every street, will flow with blood. The Disruptionist and the Unionist will hate, boycott, and stab each other. We will then wade through blood and tears to undo the synthesis which we have achieved during the last seven hundred years.

It cannot, however, be assumed that the bayonets will be kept unused while we destroy each other. They will enforce peace, the peace of the grave. The two communities will have only bartered freedom for slavery.

On the other hand, the Hindu Muslim synthesis is real.

The same blood runs in the veins of the Hindus and the Muslims of the land, a mixture of Aryan, Dravidian and Scythian. We have evolved a common language. We have created a harmony out of diversity, of which Akbar and Kabir have been the shining examples. Hindu and Muslim thoughts have influenced each other. Hindu converts have been Muslim divines. Muslims like the ministers of the King of Bengal, became Rupa and Sanatan, the great Vaishnava Goswami of the Chaitanya Sampradaya. Teachings of Guru Nanak and Kabir, and the cult of the Khojas, whose sacred book *Dasavatari* accepts the incarnations of Vishnu, have been the products of Hindu-Muslim synthesis. Our business, our pleasures, our art, music, and literature are the products of Hindu Muslim contact. In the villages where the past still lingers the Hindu and Muslim feel the kinship born of a common soil and a common culture.

Before the exigencies of political leadership in separate electorship threw up a progressively communal outlook, the Hindus and Muslims were inspired by the spirit of Isa.

I have vivid recollections of the spirit of Isa

which characterised Hindu Muslim relations in my native town forty odd years ago.

There was Faiza Miya, Kaka as we called him, a great friend of my uncle. He insisted on inviting us to dinner at his house. He got a part of his courtyard cleaned by Hindus. A Brahmin cooked for us there. We, orthodox Brahmins, with our silken garments on, dined in Brahminical style. The aged Muslim sat with us a little away, his kindly face beaming with joy at having treated his friend in the way that his friend believed in. And he was at my uncle's almost every day, sitting, chatting, eating, advising the family on its affairs.

We had a Muslim servant, who was with us for over thirty years. The rosary never left his hand. He never missed a Nimaz. The Koran was ever on his lips. But he knew and respected every habit and form of an orthodox Brahmin home. He brought up some members of my family. When we came to live in Bombay, on Shivratri and Gokulashtami days, he brought the priest and the flowers, opened the door of our house and saw to it that our household deity was duly worshipped at mid-night.

There was again a relation of ours, a strict Brahmin, who served in a noble Muslim family.

There was not a family secret which he did not know, and there was not a religious festival of his master which he did not look after.

The spirit of Isa was with us then.

I started active political life under a Muslim political leader. I was the Secretary, he the President, of our organisation. He shared his political thoughts with us; and there was not a whisper nor a breath of his which could be called communal. He was the first to insist on 'India for Indians'. He was the one who brought about the Hindu Muslim Pact of Lucknow.

His name was Mahomed Ali Jinnah.

And the spirit of Isa had then not forsaken him.

I lived under Dr. Ansari's roof, and I never felt that he was a Muslim and I a Hindu. I have seen at Sewagram the same hut sheltering Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, who drew his inspiration from Koran, and Gandhiji to whom Gita was as the breath of life. I saw them both, men of stern faith, living together in perfect harmony, their every action inspired by God who had taught them His self-same message through scriptures of differing faiths.

The spirit of Isa is forsaking some of us, not because of political rights and wrongs but because

we insist on ignoring if not destroying the cultural synthesis which subsists between the Hindus and Muslims. It is the common bond of language, school and college; of social life lived together; of historical and traditional memories of mutual goodwill; of joys and sorrows, of triumphs and defeats shared together, that creates cultural and social harmony.

Some amongst us however delight in weakening it by reducing the points of contact between the two communities.

One objects to teaching Hindustani, which we can all understand. Another objects to prescribing text books which deal with saints and heroes of both communities. A third insists on separate schools and separate curricula. History as now taught becomes a tale of strife instead of the synthesis which came out of it. Few spheres of social contact are left, except among the westernized higher classes and the criminal underworld. Contact in its modern form through voluntary organisations, outside the Congress, is being reduced to a minimum. The Hindu is thrown back on a 'Do your worst' attitude. Every effort made by the Nationalist to compromise with the Disruptionist meets with a rebuff. The Nationalist is often baffled. Inspite of every con-

scientious effort to win the goodwill of the Muslim isolationist, the Congress Ministries are painted, on imaginary charges, as being oppressive Hindu cliques. Every Nationalist, Hindu and Muslim, is treated as traitor by the Disruptionist of his respective community. Every attempt to evolve common forms of secular conduct is frustrated. There is no wonder that a sense of frustration should seize the Unionist mind.

The mind of the Hindu also contributes a great obstacle. It is essentially timid. It has not the courage to give or take boldly. Inspite of the overwhelming superiority in number the Hindu community is easily overawed. Lest one seat more be given to Muslims in the Punjab, it let go joint electorates at the first R.T.C. For one seat on the Viceroy's present Council, it possibly might have accepted the communal veto in the Viceregal declaration. The slightest danger sends it into panic. It lacks the strength to take a bold stand on fundamentals; to unite and back them up with all it is worth; to compromise without fear of appearing weak and to assert without losing the sense of proportion. It is apt to forget that thirty crores of Indians, as the Hindus are, cannot be bullied into

submission; that sharing power with a minority, which is blood of their blood, and bone of their bones, can never spell disaster to them or their culture.

The cry to dismember India is restricted to a few. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan has made a success of the Unionist Government in the Punjab. With his experience he and many like him are, and will be, against this dismemberment. Pakistan is a political slogan, not a living reality. India is one. The Nationalists, neither weak nor disorganised, believe in its indivisibility as the cardinal doctrine of their faith. There is also the huge but silent majority of Hindus and Muslims, who by habit, tradition and association have the unity of India interwoven with all they hold dear. The Disruptionist is apt to forget the unseen, but immense, determinative weight which this silent factor will throw in the scales against his disruptive ambition.

What centuries of synthesis have joined together, no man can part asunder.

The spirit of Isa will triumph.

IV

Fear Complex *

I WANT to explain to you my position first. I left the Congress because I could not reconcile myself to the principle of abjuring the use of force in matters of self-defence. I would have been untrue to myself, had I subscribed to a principle which I did not believe in. Apart from this difference, I remain the same unrepentant Nationalist that I was before I joined the Congress and since. I cannot think of political freedom for this country except on the basis of a harmonious adjustment of the claims of all our communities and interests which nationhood implies. I oppose the vivisection of India because it negatives both the existence and the future of the Nation.

I am equally convinced that the demand for the vivisection of India is intended to destroy the

*Address delivered to the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Poona, on 6th August, 1941.

position and influence of Hindus in this country. The ambition of the Disruptionists to have a Muslim majority or even an equality in the Government of India is actuated by a desire to reduce the Hindu majority to the position of a minority. The Hindus, on the other hand, so long as they are divided and disorganised cannot resist this sinister ambition. If the Hindus and other nationalist elements like the Sikhs, Christians, Nationalist Mussalmans and others, by whose joint efforts Akhand Hindustan is to march to freedom, are over-awed into submitting to India's vivisection or to their reduction to the position of a minority, life will not be worth living in this land.

Your Sangh is a widespread organisation of Hindus, pledged to the service and strengthening of Hindus. If so your first and foremost duty is, therefore, to teach fearlessness to the Hindus.

The Hindu has a difficult future to face. With the impact of new conditions the old forces which gave us unity and strength have lost their vigour. *Varnasrama Dharma*, the backbone of our social fabric—which was based on the interdependence of social groups—has lost its potency. Our society has become a conglomeration of mutually distrustful castes. Its harmony is now cut across by provincial and linguistic differences. The unity

which the Sanskrit language, Puranic tradition and Indian culture gave to India is weakened by alien influence which has destroyed the old bonds without substituting new ones. In the name of toleration we have let the social system grow nerveless. Castes cannot stabilise social life now. Joint family cannot provide social insurance. Hoary traditions which saved us from the shocks of time have lost their protective value. We ape the West. We have learnt to bend our knee to the foreigner without being conscious of the indignity involved. In our helplessness we shout, beg and curse, but know not how to consolidate our forces. And we are facing the greatest crisis in the world's history.

The one and only new force which we created in co-operation with other communities was nationalism. But at present it is at the cross roads. The labour of a century is being threatened by a few fanatical disruptionists who desire to divide India by harnessing religious bigotry to the chariot wheel of politics. No patriotic Indian whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian, can look upon this with equanimity. Akhand Hindustan was, and is, a living reality; and to the end that it must remain so, everyone of us must bend our strength.

But the greatest stumbling block to resisting the disruption of India is not the fanaticism of the Disruptionists but the fear complex of the Hindus. Of course there are exceptions, as there are to every rule. But we prefer, ordinarily, to be apologetic, lest we should lose a chance by being courageous. We create verbal illusions so that we can escape hard realities. So long as we get a job, or interest on our money, we, as a rule, will go through every humiliation. We are afraid of losing caste—not necessarily hereditary caste—but any that others may create for us. The herd sense oppresses us all the time; the straying sheep is the worst sinner.

Do not deceive yourselves that those who watch you from afar are not aware of your lack of courage. If the British throw just a few crumbs, the Hindu scrambles to pick them up. If they favour a Muslim, he rushes in lest he might be forgotten. If the British appear to lose the war, he spends sleepless nights lest Hitler might get at him.

I give you a recent instance. Sir Sikander, by his action, could change the ratio between Muslims and Hindus in the Central Government from 33 : 66 into 44 : 56. As between Hindu and non-Hindu the ratio is already 50 : 50 while the strength of Hindus is about 75% in the country.

The Hindus, forgetting their claim to representation on population basis, congratulate themselves that they are not left out altogether. The Hindus lack the courage of Sir Sikander; otherwise they could not have been so slighted or ignored.

If a Muslim frowned we would be prepared to give up our language, our dress, our culture. We are afraid of not being accepted as nationalists if we stuck to things which make us what we are. If the country is threatened with disruption, we find excuses for not resisting the threat. We are being threatened into giving up the right to go in procession, the pleasure of playing music, the pride of using a Sanskrit word, the joy of singing *Bande Mataram*, the birth-right to use Hindi. "Let's give in, lest we invite a greater calamity" we love to say. Any excuse will do provided it serves us as a cloak to our timidity.

Someone once said that the Hindus are a dying race; unless we cast out fear we shall be worse than dead—soulless. We shall be bullied, coerced, into giving up everything which makes life worth living. Nationalism, the one basis on which India hopes to build up her future, will never triumph unless we shed our fear complex; unless we remain true to our culture; and above all, un-

less we stand up against all threats. We have a language, a religion, a social structure, a culture, and above all, a country. We can only co-operate on the basis that what makes us great remains unimpaired and respected, and India, our sacred land, remains one and indivisible.

You are a large and influential body with many branches in several parts of India. Your object is to organise and strengthen the Hindu community. But in your enthusiasm for the end you have in view, do not forget that we are an unarmed subject race; that the root of our misfortunes is alien rule; that foreigners will help you only if it suits their self interest, not yours. In the struggle for Akhand Hindustan that is ahead of us, we have therefore to enlist all sections and communities of India which may be ready to join us. No strong man loses his strength by coveting the co-operation of everyone who is willing to join him. Our vision, therefore, must not become blurred by any anti-national narrow-mindedness. We should work so that the Nation may be great; that we should be true to ourselves; that we sink our provincial and linguistic differences and achieve an irresistible consolidation. But we can only be great by efforts to attain a common nationhood with other communities. A

great Indian nation is and can only be the hope of their future.

But Akhand Hindustan is not a communal problem, not even a social, political or religious one. There are some things which are above political rights and religious bonds; of them, the right to live, the right to live in security, is the most sacred. This will simply vanish, if the territorial integrity of our land is disrupted. In this sense Akhand Hindustan is above political expediency and religious difference. It is the prime necessity of life.

Nationalism is not antagonistic to my being a true Hindu, just as it is not antagonistic to a Muslim being a true Muslim. I want to live in peace and harmony with non-Hindus in India; to gain national freedom for all, by the efforts of all. But I refuse to be apologetic of my race, religion or culture. I want my country to be free and strong; I want my culture to flourish and grow strong, and deliver its message to the world. Political rights and opportunities are a mere frame work in which to live the life as my forbears conceived it. If Hinduism were an empty shell, we may as well be Muslims; if Hinduism has a meaning and a message, we shall not suffer any power on earth to tear it up from the soil of Akhand Hindustan.

To the Hindu youth my only appeal is that he should shed fear. We are thirty crores. We have strength, resources, ability, organisation. We have a proud heritage, history, culture. No one, however powerful, can keep us in serfdom or reduce us to that state, unless we ourselves want to remain or become serfs. Others try to over-awe us, for, we are willing to be over-awed. Get rid of the fear complex, I beseech you. Build your cities on the Vesuvius. Plant your feet firmly. Let your head touch the sky. For, India has a message for the weary war-ridden world.

India cannot die, for, you will save it.

V

Akhand Hindustan & International Order

AKHAND HINDUSTAN is not a political question, nor is it a religious one. The unity and integrity of India is a vital necessity for the existence of all communities in this country.

In human affairs there is a tendency to subordinate reality to slogan. Slogan is the coin of the lowest value which represents an idea, intended for circulation among the largest number of human beings. In order to secure the widest circulation, it has to be very cheap; and for securing cheapness, the Idea has to be mixed with base alloy. Very often, the alloy has little of intrinsic value in it.

One of the cheapest and most current of such slogans in the world for the last three hundred years is National Sovereignty. In the name of National Sovereignty, wars are being waged in Europe since the Holy Roman Empire was broken up in Europe. National ambitions, which

the doctrine gave rise to, brought about the World War I. They invented the Treaty of Versailles. The national ambition of England against France led to the rise of Hitler. It was the lure of National Sovereignty that destroyed the League of Nations by preventing it from assuming the role of an international government of power. International order, therefore, never placed conflicting national sovereignties. Hitlerism became the most violent and unrestrained form of national ambition yet conceived by men.

National Sovereignty, or the idea that the state is sovereign, is not something inevitably predestined by the nature of things. Prof. Laski says:

> It is an idea, with a history, the nature of which very largely explains the present position. The sovereignty of the State came into being to rescue the secular prince from the trammels of ecclesiasticism. When the Christian commonwealth of the Middle Ages broke down, simultaneously, almost, with the eclipse of a feudal society, some means was necessary to find centres of unity in the new plurality of experience. The theory of sovereignty was the means discovered. It enabled a clear system of legal obligations to be laid down which the individual evaded at his peril. The sovereignty of the State meant the supremacy of its will over all other wills which sought to contest its validity. It was never politically adequate, as the hisory of

> Church and State makes evident; and it was never ethically satisfactory, as Bodin's own insistent limitations make clear. But it satisfied the great need of certainty, and the reader of Hobbes will find hardly a page of his vigorous positivism in which the yearning for certainty, at almost any cost, is not the outcome of a grim experience of what anarchy implies.

This slogan has served the same purpose in the international field, which the instinct of self-preservation serves in a jungle. Each animal, as each nation, tries either to eat up the other or is eaten up itself. And thus we get the World War II which is the logical outcome of the narrow creed of national sovereignty.

This slogan is hopelessly unreal. The world conditions will not permit its being realized.

If the difficulties through which the world has been wading for the last few decades are examined, it would show the utter futility of attempting to eliminate wars unless national governments are replaced by an international federation armed with the strength to repress internal turbulence and meet external dangers.

What the League of Nations could not do is being done under the stress of this War. National sovereignty as a political reality was dead the day the Axis was formed, and was buried when

the Lease and Lend Bill was passed. To-day the White Constituents of the British Commonwealth, the Colonies of the Belgian and Dutch Empires and the U. S. A. on the one side, and Germany, Italy, France, Rumania, Hungary and also Japan on the other, form two vast international super-federations with Defence, Foreign Affairs and incidental matters as super-federal subjects. The victory will go to one or the other federation, and the victors will have to maintain a super-federation, indissolubly united by the exigencies of self-defence.

Just as the world learned to postulate a society with State as the source of all power, the world has, by bitter experience, learned that there is a society also of States; that if humanity is to be saved, the law of the society must be binding upon its individual members; and each State, whatever its territory, wealth or power, must be brought within an international order, of which the separate States are but parts. The world is moving towards a state of affairs when international law is primary over the municipal, and international exigencies dominate national ambitions.

India wants Independence because Indians are not free and equal partners in an international

federation. Independence is the symbol of India's urge for equality with the White constituents of the Commonwealth, an equality proportionate to its population, wealth and ability. But if by Independence is meant isolated national sovereignty, it is as dangerous both to India and to the world as the Imperialism which claims for the White man the trusteeship of the world.

Even the independent India of the ardent Nationalist cannot have the unfettered National Sovereignty of the Hobbes brand. Its defence and foreign affairs will have to be internationalised. They will have to be dealt with as supernational subjects, by the representatives of the Indian Government jointly with the representatives of the other members of the super-federation. Any other view of the future is but the phantom of a vanished age. No man with a sense of realism can entertain it during the war, or pursue it after the war.

If this is the position of India, what will happen to this will-o'-the-wisp of the national sovereignty for a minority which the Disruptionists of India hope to establish in a part of India, against the wishes of the Hindu and Muslim nationalists and the Sikhs and the Christians; against the determined efforts of the great poli-

tical parties like the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Azad Muslims, the Momin Conference and the Ahrars. Will-o'-the-wisp it is, and will remain till the end of time. But those who pursue it have been endangering the happiness and peace of this country and retarding the political emancipation of the race.

Pakistan is a hybrid born of religious intolerance and National Sovereignty. It is a claim for national sovereignty for a minority which is racially and economically one with the majority and culturally not very different. Instead of one Indian Government, it predicates two Indian Governments, each with its own defence and foreign policy; each with its minority problem rendered more acute by having a Sudetenland in each; the last word in Balkanisation.

Akhand Hindustan is not a fiction. It is a fact, woven out of racial, economic and cultural unity of all Indians; strengthened by British rule during the last century and over-whelming popular strength; sanctified by tradition and faith. And the fact will continue to be a fact till the end of time.

VI

The Menace

MY insistence on the necessity of mobilising opinion in favour of AKHAND HINDUSTAN is not the result of panic. It is an attempt to focus opinion on the principal menace to the country's well being.

The pre-British position of the Hindus and Muslims in India *inter se* was that of two religious sects of the same homogeneous people, who had come to a friendly adjustment of their religious antagonisms.

First: The political antagonisms in the country were not based on religious differences. Aurangzeb, the only fanatic Mogul Emperor, waged wars alike against the Hindu and the Muslim kings of Deccan. In the wars of the East India Company Hindu allies fought against Hindu enemies and Muslim allies against Muslim enemies. The Mutiny of 1857 was a war of inde-

pendence by both the Hindus and Muslims with the Mogul Emperor as the rallying point.

Second: The social adjustment between the two sections was complete. Each respected the other in his pursuit of his religious belief and social convention. There was no dispute about Music before the Mosque. The language of each province was the mother tongue of both. Conversion which latterly was not systematically pursued did not imply a change in social or personal habits nor relation with other communities except in matters affecting religion.

Third: The racial affinity of the population in every province made for a complete sense of unity. The Jat Hindu, the Jat Sikh, and the Jat Muslim in the Punjab were more allied to one another than the Jat Hindu of the Punjab and the Tamil Hindu of Madras.

Fourth: The caste system and the joint family system persisted among the Muslims as much as among the Hindus.

Fifth: Religious tolerance and the exchange of religious thought and practice had left little trace of religious antagonism between the two sections. Chaitanya had Muslim followers. Kabir was the apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity The two saints Diyal Bhavan and Jamali Sultan

were life-long comrades in religious life and their tombs in the Punjab are still worshipped both by Hindus and Muslims. Bawa Father, a Pir, was the disciple of a Hindu saint. Baba Shahana, a Hindu Saint, the founder of a sect, was a chela of a Muslim Pir. In Gujerat, the Hindu and the Muslim respected each other's shrines and sometimes took vows at them irrespective of the faith for which it was reared.

Sixth: As the whole population was but of one race, inspite of conversions during Muslim rule, its *economic unity was complete.*

When the British completed their conquest of India in 1857, this harmonious adjustment between the Hindu and Muslim sections of the population had just expressed itself through a common effort during which Hindu and Muslim blood had flown together to win the freedom of Hindustan. For decades thereafter, Hindus and Muslims were united in their efforts against the common exploiters; and their joint resentment against the British was responsible for the foundation of the Indian National Congress and for the first twenty years of its effort.

The British rule, the education and institutions it brought in its wake, at first cemented the unity which subsisted between the Hindus and the

Muslims. They were one people and one nation and had one national impulse for freedom.

The British, with the aid of the Sikhs, had destroyed the Hindu and Muslim power in 1857. But the opportunities which peace afforded led to an Indian struggle for power and economic supremacy in their own country which the British could not look upon with equanimity.

In this struggle the Hindus, by their number, education and wealth, were the more formidable antagonists. The British then began to woo the Muslims, in order to prepetuate their domination with the instrumentality of the largest minority of the country. This was done openly, unabashedly.

A deputation of leading Muslims staged a 'Command performance'—as the late Moulana Mohamed Ali called it—by waiting on Lord Minto and demanding separate representation.

In 1909, the British by the New Act, threw the apple of discord. Separate constituencies were created. The opposition of Saiyad Hassan Imam and Mr. Jinnah to the scheme, in the interests of the national solidarity, was of no avail.

The second stage was reached: the Muslims from a religious minority were accepted as a political minority of a single people.

Once the seed of distrust was sown, it was well looked after by the communally minded representatives in the Council whom the separate electorates had thrown up.

The war brought a deepening consciousness of national freedom. The Home Rule Movement was gathering momentum, and the communal representation provided a handy obstacle.

In October 1919, the famous Memorandum of the Nineteen was submitted. Immediately a few Muslim leaders asked for separate representation in the Punjab and C. P., fixation of the numerical strength in legislatures, and safeguards against religious legislation.

At the Lucknow Congress, December 1916, the Lucknow Pact was made. By the Pact the Muslims gained heavy weightage in the legislatures. We were then told that once that Pact was made the Muslims will march side by side with the Hindus to national freedom.

	Population	Proportion of seats.
Bengal	52.6%	76%
Bihar & Orissa	10.5%	238%
Bombay & Sind	20.4%	163%
C. P.	4.3%	349%
Madras	6.5%	231%
Punjab	54.8%	91%
U. P.	14.0%	214%

The Lucknow Pact was accepted by the Montford report, though it disapproved of it. But the British made one significant change. Instead of leaving legislation affecting religion and usages to the members of the communities affected, the previous sanction of the Governor-General to the clause was provided.

This was the third stage: The British constituted themselves the guardians and trustees of Muslim interests against the nation as a whole. The Montford Council←Reports attest to the growing claims of the Muslim communalists. Hindu-Muslim riots became a normal feature of the country. The attitude of the British Administration was throughout against the Hindus, and hostile to the Congress, the national organization.

But the majority of the Muslim leaders who had been parties to the Lucknow Pact was insatiate. They wanted 14 more points before they could work for national freedom of India. These points included among others the following:

1. Retention of the weightage for the Muslims in the six provinces where they had already secured it.
2. A fixed and unalterable majority in Bengal and the Punjab.

3. A balance of provinces in the country by creation of two Muslim provinces—Sind and N.W.F.

These points were put forward as a *quid pro quo* for joint electorates. The Hindus opposed this proposal. The Simon Commission opposed the second demand. The British Prime Minister, as an arbitrator, granted all the demands, except as to the residue in the Centre, which he did not want to part with more in British interests than in those of India. The Nationalists and the Hindus lost all they were fighting for and the British saw to it that they did not get the joint electorates.

This was the fourth stage: Instead of being content with protection as a religious and political minority, the Muslims demanded, and the British conceded, their right to secure a balance of power with the whole of India, without any commitment as to national solidarity.

The Simon Report saw neither the Nation nor the Hindu Community. It described India as "a land of minorities"; and, of course, the British were the trustees to fight the battle of minorities against the integrating force of nationalism.

The claims of the Disruptionists grew higher than on what they fed on, and the lessons which

Hitler was teaching the world came in useful. Muslims were no longer a political minority in India. It was officially claimed on their behalf by the Disruptionists that they were a national minority like Sudeten Germans.

A national minority was a minority in a new state created by the Treaty of Versailles and belonging to a race which enjoyed sovereign power in another state and the fundamental rights of which were guaranteed by the League of Nations. These National Minorities became willing instruments in the hands of the country of their race for sabotaging the nationalising attempts of the New States, and were responsible for the World War II. How Hitler destroyed Czechoslovakia in the name of Sudeten Germans is recent history.

A new stage was reached when the Muslim League assumed the role of Hitler and demanded equality for the Sudeten Muslims of the whole of India. Its demands, *inter alia* in 1938, were :

1. Fourteen points of 1929, that is, no Government of India with residual powers.
2. Statutorily fixed share in the services.
3. Protection for personal law and culture; Sahid Ganj Mosque; freedom of religious practice; protection of the right to slaughter cows.

4. "Bande Mataram" to be given up. Tricolour Flag to be given up or Muslim League Flag to be accepted as equal to the Tricolour.
5. Muslim League to be recognised as the only representative organization of the Muslims in the country.
6. Coalition Ministries in the Provinces.

These demands were tantamount to the Congress, the Nationalists (both Hindus and Muslims) and the Hindus giving up their national character and their objectives of nationhood and democracy. A minority insisting on being treated as a high negotiating party with the rest of the country.

This is the fifth stage: In 1939 the demands had grown further.

1. Fifty per cent for Muslims in Legislatures and Services.
2. Acceptance of Urdu as the National Language.

No Sanskrit word was to be tolerated, though it was the sacred language of thirty crores of Indians; even a harmless word like "Vidya Mandir" offended the Muslims in C. P. where they formed but 4.40% of the population. Urdu

on the other hand was to be imposed as a National Language of 322 millions of India, (including 40 millions of Muslims) 80% of whom speak languages based on Sanskrit.

Education, Marriage and Social Relations which form the media of harmonising racial and communal differences were being segregated in compartments. No Muslim boy is to begin education except in Urdu and only through text books which deal with Islam. The Shariat Act in the twinkling of an eye changed the personal law of unwilling millions of Muslims who were governed by Hindu usages. Islam was a proselytising cult, Hinduism an exclusive one; and proselytising was favoured by the Muslim community as an act of religious merit. Thus the two communities began drifting further apart. There is no denying the fact that there is greater estrangement, greater distrust and greater resentment between the two communities at present; and that this is the creation of short sighted people.

But *the sixth stage* was reached when PAKISTAN was ushered into politics on the back of the two nation theory, and Gandhiji was treated as representative of Hindus. Muslims were no longer a national minority, but a nation. The

Congress was only a National Congress of the Hindu Nation.

Dr. Ambedkar had obligingly worked out a scheme of Pakistan consisting of predominantly Muslim areas. But the disruptionists are conveniently vague about their schemes. They may want *lebensraum*; they may want a port or two; they may want to have a few surrounding Hindu States in order to play the Suzerain. What more may be needed to feed such growing appetite it is difficult to say.

But *the seventh stage* came in 1940, when as a sort of super race of India, they demanded the right to rule India. In the terms offered to Lord Linlithgow, the Disruptionists demanded, first 50% in the Government of India if the Congress came in; or a majority if the Congress did not; that is a majority in any event. Secondly : No more changes in Government of India unless the Disruptionists agree.

Nationalism was thus to be destroyed; the Hindus were to be reduced to serfdom; and the Anglo-Muslim syndicate was to hold India in fee!

This would ordinarily look like a mid-summer night fancy of Bottom when he had the ass's head on. But it is not so.

The recent riots point to a determined technique. "The third thing that is noticeable", says Dr. Ambedkar, "is the adoption by the Muslims of gangsters' methods in politics. The riots are a sufficient indication that gangsterism has become a settled part of their strategy in politics. They seem to be consciously and deliberately imitating the Sudeten Germans in the means employed by them against the Czechs."*

It is a mistake to imagine that Pakistan has been a cry only restricted to the Disruptionists. It has gone down to the Muslim masses as an anti-Hindu war cry.

The second reason is that Britain, though it created this Frankenstein, is not equal to fighting it by itself. This has always been the result of its usual unimaginative diplomacy.

Britain's greatest ally in India was the educated Indian Nationalist, steeped in British tradition and nourished on English literature. He only wanted some form of Dominion Status. He could not think, inspite of bold words, of anything except an honoured and equal place in the British Commonwealth.

But the Muslims were led step by step to increase their claims to fight this nationalist ambi-

(*Thoughts on Pakistan*, p. 267).

tion. As the result, Disruptionists now seek to convert religious enthusiasm into political fanaticism in order to substitute themselves as the ruling race in this country.

In 1921, it appears from the brilliant chapter *Weakening of the Defences*, in the aforecited book, Muslims were 24.9% of the Indian Army. In 1930, the Muslim percentage was raised to 30%. In order to strengthen the Army against the Hindu politicians likely to secure power under the 'progressive realization of responsible Government' this percentage was raised, in 1940, the learned author thinks the percentage may be anything between 50 to 70%. Some say it is even more. No Indian seems to know the exact truth.

In fairness, however, to the British and to the present Viceroy, it must be confessed that they were keen on implementing the Government of India Act of 1935, because, among other things, they foresaw the dangers of a disruption. But the outburst of the War rendered the keenness academic.

Attempts are being made either to disrupt the country and start the two Indias on a career of mutual aggression, or to destroy nationalism and reduce the Hindus to a statutory minority.

If the Muslims demanded a redistribution of provinces in such a manner as to give them provinces with a predominant Muslim population; if they asked for wider powers for such provinces, with say, option to federate later as to some of them; if they required safeguards against the Centre rendering the powers nugatory; if they insisted upon fundamental rights of cultural and religious freedom for Muslims and Hindus in all provinces, one could not ignore the justice of the claim.

But their demand as at present is a MENACE to the country and its people including the Muslims. Neither attempt will succeed. But so long as either of the attempts continue to be made it will bring in its trail a blood feud which will mar the harmony of life and keep India from self-realization.

Whatever the nature or the magnitude of the menace, it must be met, and met both wisely and well. Akhand Hindustan cannot die.

VII

If Nationhood Is Negatived

I HAVE repeatedly said that *Akhand Hindustan* movement is not, and is not intended to be, a party. It is the concern of every party and interest in the country. Gandhiji once solemnly stated: "vivisect me before vivisecting the country." And going to the antipodes, even Mr. Amery, who is always ready to oblige the Disruptionists, has not yet thrown off his loyalty to *Akhand Hindustan*. Any attempt, therefore, to make it the plank of only one party will serve an interest exactly the contrary. Other parties may come to feel that it is less of a concern of theirs.

For the Muslims I have the same love as for other sons of the soil. The bulk of the Muslims in the country are Hindu converts to Islam. In accepting a different faith they did not become foreigners. Inextricably bound with the economy of the whole country, they are one and indivisible with the Hindus.

The attitude of the nationalists against the proposal to vivisect the country is clear. If Muslims are a political and religious minority and desire to stand shoulder to shoulder with Hindus and other communities on the march to national freedom, every legitimate right should and must be secured to them. Indian nationalists never want to build their freedom on the serfdom of any minority. We are one Nation; we wish for a National Government; we want National Freedom. We are prepared to accept any scheme for the safeguarding of minorities which does not interfere with this conception. It was this desire which inspired the Karachi Resolution of the Congress on Fundamental Rights.

But the ambition of the Disruptionists is not to get cultural protection for a religious minority. Neither is it an attempt to secure safeguards for a political minority. It is not even the claim of a national minority to obtain autonomy in its own area within the framework of a single State. The objective of this movement is to break up the unity of the country; to destroy the Indian nation; to frustrate the prospect of national freedom; to dominate India in the name of a religious minority; to reduce Hindus and other communities to the position of serfs.

Few realise the implications of the Pakistan movement. We are, in fact, afraid to do so. The Indian mind, with its usual sophistry, thinks that somehow, sometime, they will not arise.

If Pakistan comes in either of its aspects, the country will be cut in twain. Its racial and economic integrity will be sundered. Indians will be foreigners in the land of their birth. Two camps, armed to the teeth, will seek to destroy each other's freedom and culture. The whole country will be converted into what the District of Dacca was during the recent riots.

The alternative to Pakistan suggested by the Disruptionists is more dangerous still. The confessed ambition of the Disruptionists is that nine crores of Indians should be secured an equality with the remaining thirty by some legislative trick. The machinery of the state will, it is hoped, then pass from the people as a whole into their hands.

This ambition of the Disruptionists is in striking contrast to the Muslim claim in the past. In the Punjab and Bengal, it was claimed that the majority of Muslims needed protection against the non-Muslims and so they secured a majority representation by statute. In the name of the same protection now one quarter of the country wants a statutory equality with three quarters.

This conjuring trick can only be performed: first, if the religious bond of Islam is converted into an aggressive political force and sustained by religious fanaticism; secondly, if the Hindus, and other communities including the nationalist Muslims are so disorganised or terrorised that they will not have any effective voice in the creation of this topsy-turvydom.

A minority so organised and inspired, enjoying equality at the centre against disorganised opposition, will mean the certain exploitation of the machinery of the State against the non-Muslims. The plight of Hindus in Bengal in matters affecting even culture shows which way the wind is sure to blow.

Nationalism is based on the principles of liberal democracy: the rule of the people, by the people, for the people; the rule of a majority in politico-economic spheres, with due regard to the cultural and other special rights of all communities. But the claim of a religious minority to dominate the machinery of the State in this fashion is the negation of freedom, of democracy, of nationalism; a negation of the elementary decencies of civilised life. A claim like this, no doubt, can be enforced by force of arms. But it cannot be the subject of

negotiations. And if it is sought to be enforced by turbulence or blackmail, it becomes the duty of every nationalist to oppose it at all costs.

The Pakistan movement is not merely political; it is the result of a generation old tendency to overawe the whole life of the country. It has sinister cultural aspects with which we are all too familiar. I will deal with one aspect of it, an aspect which I have found it difficult to explain except on the ground of its being blackmail.

At the highest, twenty-eight million Indians (mostly Muslims) speak Urdu; it is not even the mother-tongue of all Muslims of India. Under pressure of religious sentiment, Muslims whose mother-tongue is Sindhi, Gujerati, Marathi or Canarese and who know little Urdu or none had to assent to the claim of its being their mother-tongue; a mother-tongue which their mothers did not know.

Hindi—the creation of Hindus and Muslims of earlier times—has a Sanskrit vocabulary common to the language of 72% of Indians. It is understood by millions of Muslims. It is, therefore, the natural national language of India.

But the Muslims objected to Hindi being the national language. Hindustani, they said, must be the national language. When we formed the

Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad at Nagpur in 1935—it is defunct now—Gandhiji fashioned the word Hindi-Hindustani for the basic form of language of which Hindi and Urdu were the literary aspects. Then came the protest. It must be called Hindustani. We yielded. We knew Shakespeare. We said what's in a name. But this was not enough. Urdu, it is now claimed, must be the national language of India. The language of 28 millions must be imposed upon 40 millions of Muslims and 322 millions of Indians.

If this claim is true the majority has no right to contribute its culture to the national synthesis.

This claim is not a theoretical claim; it has passed into the region of action. In C. P. where Muslims are only 4.4%, the Congress Government used the word Vidya Mandir for school. A Sanskrit name was anathema to the Muslims. Agitation was set on foot to have the name changed. Religious sentiment was stated to be offended and with our usual temperamental sweetness—some one may call it by some other name—we yielded. Or, was it that the British as usual ran to the rescue?

Bande Mataram, to the tune of which some of the Disruptionists have stood up for years, shared the same fate. It had to be truncated.

Many friends have drawn my attention to the word 'Akhand' in *Akhand Hindustan* as being offensive to the Muslims. To my knowledge there is no other word in any Indian language, which is known so widely even among the Muslims as 'Akhand'. But the objection is not to the word being obscure. It arises from the arrogant insistence that no Sanskrit word should be used for any common idea or activity which the Muslims are invited to share.

Unfortunately a section of the Muslims are being trained by the Disruptionists to the sentiment that nothing should be considered acceptable unless it implies a surrender by the Hindus of what they hold dear. A partnership between Hindus and Muslims, as a nationalist conceives it, implies a whole hearted co-operation between the members of both communities, a friendly and welcome exchange of their respective cultural possessions. But the claim put forward by the Disruptionists that a partnership is never possible unless the majority surrenders what it prizes and conforms to the sentiments of the minority is the most dangerous form of mass arrogance, to which no self-respecting people will submit.

As an Indian I would like to share the literary wealth of Urdu and Persian cherished by the

Muslim. As an Indian he must be equally ready to honour and cherish Sanskrit which I hold dearer than life. The national language of the future can be built only on the resources of Sanskrit and Persian elements. It does not mean the superimposition of one element over the other, with the aid of Hitlerian shock tactics.

Every time I have seen Indians yield to such tactics, I have been ashamed of myself, mortified. If this kind of insistent attempt is calculated to establish that, in the national life of the future, I must foreswear Sanskrit and what it means, that the culture which represents it will have to be sacrificed, it is not partnership, it is slavery. My nationalism cannot be exploited to enforce a national wrong on the country.

But this insistence on Urdu is one of the pointers to what Pakistan means. For twenty-five years, Gandhiji, the greatest man in modern history, has tried to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity in India. With super-human self-restraint he has created a sentiment among a vast majority of Hindus that they must think in terms of the nation, not of the community. But this work is now being undone by the arrogant band of Disruptionists, who have hitched their wagon to the star of political and cultural overlordship.

I invite the thoughtful Muslims to pause and think. The Disruptionists are teaching Muslims to think, talk and act only in terms of Muslim India—a separate nation—a minority domination of the country, and are thus destroying the common sentiment of nationhood which Indians have built up so far. As a result the Hindus and other communities out of sheer despair and a desire for self-defence, are developing a protective complex. Attempts at blackmail invariably result in the victim developing the will to resist.

The Disruptionists demand Pakistan. But will it render both communities happy and friendly in two neighbouring states? Where is the scheme which will bring about this result?

Dr. Ambedkar has worked out a scheme of Pakistan by lumping together the predominantly Muslim districts of the Punjab, Bengal and N.W.F. and Sind. The Pakistan will contain about 2 crores of Sudeten Hindus and the new Hindustan will have 1 crore and 80 lakhs of Sudeten Muslims. This will lead to a perpetual conflict. The Sudetens will have to be transplanted. If not, Sudeten Hindus will have to be protected by Hindustan and the Sudetan Muslims by Pakistan. In any event, crores of Indians will find themselves turned into foreigners in their

own homes. Areas which are economically inter-dependent will have to build tariff walls. Conflict will follow.

One's mind naturally goes back to the American Civil War, when the Southerners wanted to break up the integrity of U.S.A. There can be but one lesson of that historical episode. Those who sow the seeds of disruption must reap the harvest of a civil war.

Will all the communities and parties and interests sit still under such a threat? Has the Congress lost its formidable strength? Have the nationalist Muslims and the Christians lost their sense of proportion? Have the Hindus lost their vitality? Have Sikhs and Rajputs, Mahrattas and Jats lost the valour of their fathers?

If the Disruptionists are not brought to a sense of wrong they are inflicting on the country, a long drawn period of agony and torture will follow. The country will be desecrated by a fratricidal war. The gains of centuries will be lost in a decade.

Who can avert this catastrophe? A strong and insistent public opinion alone can work the miracle. The Disruptionists can, but they will not. The British could have, but they did not. Who can avert it now?

The spirit of Nationalism alone can do it.....

I am asked what I mean by *Akhand Hindustan* and what I propose to do about it. By *Akhand Hindustan* I mean the integrity of our country, the motherland of every Indian and the security which such integrity involves; the peace which comes of a harmonious adjustment of political rights, of the economic interdependence of all classes and interests, of the freedom to pursue our life in the characteristic way prescribed by our respective culture and religion.

Akhand Hindustan is therefore not a political question. It is a supra-political question. Politics presupposes the existence of a State and a mutuality of rights and obligations among the citizens. But where the existence of the framework itself is put in issue, when adjustment is replaced by coercion, the question becomes a non political one. It goes to the very root of social existence. It affects every individual irrespective of his political conviction or conduct. It is calculated to break up the continuity of institutional development in the land; to snap the golden thread of culture which maintains and enriches the texture of life.

Akhand Hindustan is therefore a moral issue which cannot be weighed in the scales of political

convenience. I use the word moral as an equivalent of supra-political advisedly. Every people have a right to live in security in the land of their fathers; to develop there freely on the lines of their own growth. When that right is challenged or violated, it is not merely vandalism, it s a moral wrong, a sin. When such wrong is ntended to disturb the basis of social existence tself it is a moral issue of paramount importance.

Many ask me how *Akhand Hindustan* is going to be secured. No one need secure it. India was *akhand* and is *akhand*. It has only to be preserved *akhand*.

I know that the sinister challenge to *Akhand Hindustan* has to be met and will be met. No moral issue has suffered for lack of men ready tc work, to suffer, to die for it. India, I know, will stand firm. It will resist the challenge by thought, word and deed.

I know that men will come forth to carry the message of resistance to all parts of the country. The British will not hinder, unless their desire for world peace is dishonest. The world opinion itself will help us to avoid a catastrophe which would destroy the life of four hundred millions of men and make India a plague spot of the earth.

VIII

Civic Sense

THERE is a general hunt after remedies for riots. Many remedies are proposed, recommended But there is only one remedy, without which others are of no avail. It is the possession and exercise of the civic sense by the ordinary citizen.

When a *goonda* has stabbed a man, if the passers-by, or men in the neighbourhood, capture him, further stabbing will cease. When a riotous crowd is proceeding about its nefarious work, if the law-abiding resist them, riots will stop. When at Ahmedabad a mob of incendiaries was burning houses on the Richy Road, if crowds of citizens had come forward to resist them, the mob would have been controlled. But such preventive action is only possible if citizens have a civic sense, if they feel it their duty to arrest the wrongdoer, if they exercise the right which Law gives to every citizen.

Even the Law recognises the right of every private person, on his own authority, and without any sanction of a magistrate, to suppress a riot by every means in his power. 'He may disperse', said Tindal, C. J. in his classic charge to the Bristol Grand Jury, 'or assist in dispersing those who are assembled; he may stay those who are engaged in it from executing their purpose; he may stop and prevent others whom he shall see coming up, from joining the rest and not only has he the authority, but it is his bounden duty as a good subject of the King, to perform this to the utmost of his ability. If the riot be general and dangerous, he may arm himself against the evil-doers to keep the peace....But if the occasion demands immediate action, and no opportunity is given for procuring the advice or sanction of the magistrate, it is the duty of every subject to act for himself and upon his own responsibility in suppressing a riotous and tumultuous assembly; and he may be assured that whatever is honestly done by him in the execution of that object will be supported and justified by the common law.'

Recent riots have clearly shown that Indians not only do not perform this elementary duty, but are not even aware that anything of this kind is expected of them. When something in the

nature of a tumult is on, the first instinct of an Indian is to take to his heels.

The reasons for this tendency are two: firstly, one likes to be at a safe distance from trouble; secondly, one likes to escape the uninviting attentions of the Police which resistance involves.

The first reason is the result of timidity and the absence of the civic sense; the second arises from the fact that the Police in India is not a respector of the civic sense or self-defence.

Our timidity is proverbial and is principally due to the fact that the Britsh have disarmed us for about a century.

In one of the recent riots, it is stated, a woman on the ground floor shouted to her husband who was on the first floor, that some *goondas* were nearby. The husband telephoned for the Police, and when it came, insisted on his wife being escorted upstairs.

Another story of mass cowardice is almost unmatched in the annals of that not uncommon vice. In one of the riot infested cities, during certain hours of one night, shouts of Allah-ho-Akbar came from Muslim localities. The Hindus, an overwhelming majority, sat in their homes with cold feet, shivering with fear. It did not strike them that if they only exercised their

throats and shouted "Har Har Mahadeva" or "Bande Mataram", the problem of nerves would have been solved straightaway. But the actual result was that next morning the Hindus began to leave their city.

The same mood prevails in Bombay. There are no press reports of the riots in the City now-a-days. But many panicky citizens are certain that the silence is the result of a conspiracy between the police and the press, and that the riots are going on somewhere all the time. This is only another form of timidity. Suppose they are going on. What then? How is reading the reports of riots going to put a stop to them? If they are going on—as it is believed and whispered from mouth to mouth—the way to stop them is not to go on gossiping but to develop the strength to resist the *goonda*; to cultivate the art of self-defence; to train oneself in the art of mass courage by organising young men of every locality to look after its safety; to exercise the civic duty of resisting and arresting the wrong-doer. Let us not forget the sublime courage with which men, women and children in Britain have organized themselves for self-defence in recent months. It is a glorious chapter in the history of man; an inspiration to all men struggling to acquire the will to resist.

I realise that we cannot develop the civic sense fully unless the Police encourages it. At present the Indian Police has unfortunately the complex of an army of occupation. Its general attitude is unsympathetic. The only method of suppressing riots which it knows is to strike the maximum of terror without being held guilty of transgressing the law. It rarely discriminates between the wrong-doer and the man defending himself. If it sees two crowds fighting, it ropes in everybody—the combatants, the spectators, sometimes even the shopkeepers sitting in the neighbouring shops. It enters into chawls and spreads terror. It even breaks open—as it did in Ahmedabad—the street gates, behind which trembling men and women have sought shelter. When the riots are no longer affrays but solitary stabbings it denies to citizens the right to carry even the most innocuous of lethal weapons. Of course all this is done with the laudable object of maintaining order, but this method puts a discount on courageous resistance against the wrong-doer and prevents the growth of the civic sense by eliminating in the citizen every desire to co-operate with the Police.

These being the conditions of the problem, it remains to be seen what means are available to

develop the sense. The remedy is twofold: First to instil civic sense in the people, maybe in groups if not in individuals; Second, to train the Police to appreciate and encourage its growth among citizens and protect those who exercise it during disturbances.

The best way of acquiring this civic virtue for a man is to train himself to act with others in a mass, not as an individual. A man may be a coward when alone; in company he plays up to the expectations of his friends and becomes courageous. A little Hindu girl, normally perhaps unable to stand up even to her younger brother, defied a burly sergeant in 1930 when an admiring crowd of thousands was there to cheer her.

If, therefore, all localities try to develop this sense in groups, individuals are sure to develop it even if they have none. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that all localities should learn in times of trouble to act in concert, think together on the problems of civic responsibilities, and emphasise the duties which a citizen owes to society.

To train the Police to respect the civic sense, when there is no popular Government to control them, is a matter of great difficulty. But it has to be undertaken, if we are to see the end of this

trouble. The Police force, in spite of its being a semi-military organization, remains highly sensitive to public opinion, and if public attention is focussed on their activities in a responsible manner, it will soon learn to distinguish between the wrong-doer and the man who tries to stand up to the wrong-doer.

This can only be done by responsible leaders if they exert themselves.

IX

A Nationalist Muslim

AT Ludhiana I spent the day with Mufti Moulvi Mahomed Naeem, a learned Muslim divine, a member of the Working Committee of the Jamiat-Ul-Ulema-in-Hind.

He is a man past middle age, self-possessed, shrewd, with a keen sense of humour. Deep read and widely informed, he speaks Urdu—somewhat difficult for me to follow—with that musical cadence which long chanting of beautiful words gives to religious men. With a twinkle, humorous no doubt, but which measures your depth with uncanny insight, the Mufti Saheb is sure of himself, his views and his ideals.

It was a treat to have spent the day with him.

As President of the District Congress Committee, he started the first function of the day with flag salutation. In a neat little speech he referred to the greatness of the Congress, the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the needs of

nationalism. Incidentally he administered a very mild rebuke to me for leaving the Congress, a rebuke for which I bore him no grudge.

We went together to Bhaini Saheb, 16 miles from Ludhiana. In the evening, talking over men and things the Mufti Saheb let himself go on various topics of the day. He was a Congressman and a nationalist to the very core. He said: "I did not become a member of the Congress like you people. I was born a Congressman. My father, a great Moulvi, was a Congressman. He was one of the Ulemas who laid down, first in 1885, the Fatwa that a Muslim can join the Congress and work out national redemption for India. I intend to die one day as a Congressman."

But Mufti Saheb was not less a devout Mussalman, because he was a devoted nationalist. His was the nationalism of a man who was true to his religion. He stood in sharp contrast to the large number of our Hindu nationalists who feel that if one were a staunch Hindu he would be less of a nationalist. It is a characteristic only of the weak to be ashamed of one's religion and culture lest he may be treated as a second class nationalist.

Mufti Saheb in his speech later in the day

made the position clear. He said something to this effect:

"I am an Indian. I am a Mussalman. I cannot be asked to choose between the one or the other. Both have brought me into existence, and my loyalty to each is the source of my strength for serving both. I might as well say that I am born of my father and not of my mother."

In the course of his conversation he said: "I am a devout Muslim myself. I respect a devout Hindu. We can then both understand each other and be friends. I was in jail with X, a devout Hindu. If X got up earlier than I did, he would spread my mat for my prayers and his mat for his *Sandhya*. If I got up earlier I would do likewise. This is what I want."

Mufti Saheb was right. Half the trouble in India arises from the fact that the Hindu nationalist is too facile to be respected by his devout Muslim friend. I remember my days in Yeravda Jail, when my friend Mr. Nurie studied his *Koran* and I my *Gita* and both of us respected each other. The spirit of Isa pervaded us both.

And my mind went back to the hut at Sewagram where the *Gita*-made Gandhiji and the *Koran*-made Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan live in the same God through different forms but in the self same way.

The Mufti Saheb had no illusions about the European influence. He repeated more than once that we who had studied Euglish learnt of its deleterious effects after bitter experience, but he knew it from the beginning. He illustrated his remark by an apt anecdote.

In Missar there was a Pharoah who claimed to be God himself. It was foretold to him by an astrologer that among his slaves would be born a man who would deny his godhood. Thereupon the king got the babes of the slave community massacred.

One of the babes, however, was saved and brought up in the king's palace. He grew up to manhood, and when he faced the king he stood up and boldly denied his godhood. The young man proclaimed that there was a great God who was the God of all, including the king. Thereupon the king again ordered the massacre of the babes of the slaves so that no one could deny his godhood thereafter.

But, continued the Mufti Saheb, the present rulers need not do anything of the kind, for have they not invented the colleges where the sons of India can be rendered as harmless as when massacred? He quoted two Urdu lines from Akbar Allahabadi:

Afsos ke phiraon ko kallege ke na suje

Eun katl se baccho ke vo badnam na hota

(It is a pity that Pharoah didn't think of opening a college; had he done so, he would have been saved the infamy of a Massacre of Innocents.)

I appreciated his point of view. I have realised the havoc which University education has done to the ideals and character of our younger generation. I myself in the course of thirty years had to unlearn most of the things which I learnt in the college and I could not but feel that this devout Muslim divine with his mocking smile and twinkling eye had a clearer vision into the reality of things than we who claim to know the wisdom of the East and the West.

On Pakistan, the Mufti Saheb took a characteristically bold attitude at the Ludhiana Conference. He condemned it outright. He declared that the proposed Pakistan was not an Islamic Government.

And as I bade him goodbye on the station, God alone knows how ardently I wished that there were more Muslims of Mufti Saheb's type in this country.

For long I pondered over the race of men which had produced Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr.

Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Saheb and Mufti Saheb, over the India of pre-British days when Hindus and Muslims combined to resist the British penetration into the country.

And, if this race of men could re-acquire their hold over the Muslim masses in India, what wonders India would not perform!

X

Akhand Hindustan Will Not Die*

MY thanks are due to friends in Ludhiana who invited me to preside over this conference and it gives me great pleasure to meet many friends whom otherwise I would never have met.

I do not deserve the compliments paid to me for drawing the country's attention to the need for mobilising public opinion in favour of Akhand Hindustan. The critical nature of the times through which we are passing requires that every one of us must tell the truth as he feels it, unequivocally and fearlessly. We live in times when patternisation is a much worshipped virtue. But unless speaking and living the truth is pursued as a religious duty, democracy would be a farce and life itself, a fraud.

*Presidential Address at the Akhand Hindustan Conference held on 1, November '41 at Ludhiana.

The War has unsettled minds as well as nations; and though luckily India as a country remains settled, forces which can be directly traced to the War are threatening to destroy the India of the future.

When the War broke out, India—in provinces—was on its way to self-rule, and on the whole was pro-British. India wanted to wage the war for the British as a partner, not as a bondsman. But the British would not have it; and you know what followed. In six provinces, democracy stood forfeited. All the resources of India were pledged by an unrepresentative Government to the war effort. The National Congress went into wilderness out of self-respect. British diplomacy, in order to thwart the national urge to freedom, set about exploiting the Pakistan movement. The protagonists of Disruption—for that is what Pakistan means—were placed on the same pedestal as the spokesmen of the Nation, pampered, patted, made arbiters of India's political progress. They proved handy instruments of obstruction.

The ground for a movement of disruption had been carefully planned out and prepared. With separate electorates the seeds of disruption had been sown. Such of the fourteen points of Mr. Jinnah as had been conceded by the obliging Mr.

Ramsay MacDonald had converted a religious minority into a force aspiring for a provincial balance of power in the country. From that the fragmentation of the country as a political platform was but a step. The Muslim League has formally disowned the unity of the country. Its avowed and sole object is Pakistan. It is not a party in Indian politics. It is pledged to break up India. It is openly working to tear up the fabric of strength and unity which we have reared up for centuries. It has adopted activities which, if pursued, will inevitably result in marring the peace and harmony in the country. It conducts a persistent campaign to form a Muslim nation, and to destroy the basis of Indian Nationalism. It hopes to exploit Islam for the political end of dominating the country either by its partition or by reducing the majority into a statutory equality.

The scheme of Disruption is left sufficiently vague; but some of its features, which have already been vouchsafed, disclose its sinister implications. These features are:

First: Muslims all over India are a separate and single nation.

Second: Muslims from all over India are entitled to one or more homelands where life and gov-

ernment are to be moulded according to Koranic principles, and where Urdu will be the national language.

Third: The non-Muslim minorities in this Pakistan and the Muslim minorities in the new Hindustan will have to look to the Pakistan government for protection.

Said the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy recently: "We wish to create homelands for the Muslim nation where we can fashion the world according to the tenets of our religion, where we can demonstrate to the world how diverse communities, hitherto warring and suspicious of each other, can live in friendship, amity and in toleration and co-operation with each other for the common good." The Pakistan Government is also to save the Muslims in Hindustan from the nightmare through which they recently passed, of course, under the Congress Governments.

In short, Pakistan is to be the homeland of the Muslims, where the State will be an Islamic institution. It will look after the non-Muslim population with tolerance, presumably of the Dacca and Sarghoda variety; and it will look after the Sudeten Muslims in Hindustan—possibly in the way that Hitler looked after the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia!

I will now examine the three claims:—

Are Muslims from all over India a separate and Muslim nation?

A nation is a group of human beings who *will* themselves into a deliberate and conscious unity based on the love of a single geographical unit, sustained by a tradition of heroic deeds performed by the group in the past, and rendered effective by a habit of working together under the pressure of a single collective will.

Are Muslims a Muslim nation or a part of the wider unit, the Indian nation? The Muslims of India are a religious group, but as a group they have never related their unity to any specific part of India, but to the whole of India, just as the Hindus and the Sikhs do; that is, they feel that they are the sons of India in common with others. Muslims are not a wandering tribe seeking a homeland; they with others share the loyalty to one mother country. This common relationship to India as a whole is the result of racial unity; of the economic interdependence of all parts of India; of that cultural adjustment which has arisen out of centuries of common life. The so-called Muslim nation is therefore not a nation appropriately so termed.

The Muslims of India, again, as a whole, have

no exclusive common tradition of heroism, as against the others. Read any page of Indian history you like. At no time during the last eight centuries after Kutbuddin Aibak downwards have the Muslims in India as a group fought the Hindus as a hostile group. The only time when the Muslim rulers ruled the bulk of the country was during the time of Akbar, Jehangir, and Shahjehan, when the Imperial sway was supported by Hindus and Muslims alike. But Muslims of India as a whole have never in the course of our history worked together under the pressure of a single collective will against the rest of India. Religious antagonism did play a part; but in the end an adjustment had been brought about which recognised and accepted the differences in religious rituals and respected them. The claim that the Muslims in India are a separate national entity is therefore false historically, and false if the objective conditions of the present are examined.

On the contrary, if there is one constant effort of the Indian mind throughout the ages, it is to unite under the compelling conception of a single Motherland, be it called Aryavarta, Bharat, Hindustan or India. All great Indians of whom we are proud, in religion, literature, art or politics,

have realised their greatness in relation to Hindustan. The traditions which our ancestors have woven round us have made of the whole country a shrine to be worshipped. Again and again, we —Hindus and Sikhs and Muslims alike—have expressed ourselves through a single collective will. India, as a nation—Akhand Hindustan—is therefore a living reality.

But in the affairs of men, logic plays but a small part. A fanatical urge, a mass emotion, may, without achieving any lasting result, work temporary havoc. The Disruptionists hope that such temporary havoc, if ingeniously worked, would frighten men into conceding the vivisection of India particularly on account of the unsettled conditions which would arise immediately after this war.

The Disruptionists count on many factors in their favour. They hope to harness to their political ambition the religious zeal of the Muslim Community. They depend upon the Nationalist Muslims not gathering sufficient strength to influence any appreciable portion of the Muslim masses. They count upon the disorganised Hindus to surrender under the pressure of violent outbursts of religious intolerance. They rely, in some distant way, upon the sympathy of the Mus-

lims of the Middle East. But more than that they count upon the British, who in their anxiety to keep back India from its destiny of national freedom may—it is expected—help them to disrupt the country when political adjustments take place after the War.

They rely upon religious frenzy to achieve happy political results; but such frenzy, if roused to fury, can at most produce a recurring epidemic of stray murder and arson.

Such an epidemic, in the first place, cannot recur unless the governments of the day are unwilling or unable to enforce order promptly; and where such recurrence is common, Government cannot escape the charge of complicity, direct or indirect.

But an epidemic of murder and arson, however virulent or connived at, cannot coerce a people to divide their country. It will only strengthen the weak and the wavering. A race, however timid, and disorganised—and those who look to religious frenzy for political salvation think that non-Muslims are such a race—will not look upon its members being knifed, its women dishonoured, or its shrines desecrated without developing a complex of determined resistance. The orgy of knifing which the Arabs and Jews indulged in in Pales-

tine led them nowhere, certainly not towards the solution of their troubles. The Dacca riots have only led to Hindu stiffening. The Ahmedabad riots led to a similar result. There is a widespread feeling among the Hindus that they are in danger; that the British Government does not give them sufficient protection. Human ingenuity is limitless. If the instruments of violence do not suffice, the more far-reaching instruments of non-violent resistance, for instance, migration, non-cooperation, economic boycott, will be used.

But in India centuries of adjustment has so balanced the communities that further internal strife cannot achieve a substantial shift in the balance of power. In provinces outside the Punjab and Bengal, either the Hindus or the Muslims are in an over-whelming majority. Communal riots, if they take place on a large scale for a long time in such provinces, will have only one unfortunate result. The minority will be crushed, or will have to migrate to safer places; a result which Muslims will not wish for in Bihar, Orissa, U.P., C.P., Bombay and Madras, and the Hindus certainly not in N.W.F. and Sind.

That leaves Bengal and the Punjab. In Bengal there is a greater homogeneity between the Hindus and Muslims than elsewhere. Both come

from the same race, speak the same language, have a common dress. Both, in the villages, wear dhoti and grow the beard. The Hindus are 2.15 crores, the Muslims 2.74 crores (1931 census). The present Pakistan movement led by some members of the Huq government is nothing but confessedly anti-Hindu. It is supported in office by British votes. Its communal excesses have remained uncontrolled. Its intentions are being carried out by British officers. Thus what looks like the strength of the Disruptionist movement in Bengal is solely due to British preference for the convenient Muslim to the political Hindu.

The uncertainties of political party strife in Bengal are also responsible for the weakening of resisting elements in Bengal. The Hindus in Bengal, inspite of their differences, have been stirred to their depths. The Nationalist Muslims, though few, are not quite without influence. And if Dacca is repeated—I hope it won't be—Bengal will not allow itself to be terror-struck. A people as homogeneous as in Bengal, once awakened to the danger, will not stand any such bullying.

In the Punjab, there is lack of neither strength nor courage. The Sikhs stand shoulder to shoulder with the rest of us—the sword-arm of Akhand Hindustan.

There is a tendency to look upon the talk of Disruption as unreal. It is suggested that the less we talk about the Disruptionists the greater will be the chance of achieving national unity and freedom; that insistence on Akhand Hindustan will weaken our will to fight for freedom. I have searched in vain for any sign which would justify this optimism. Those who think like this have forgotten the lessons of the last quarter of a century and have no eyes to see the reality which confronts them. So far back as 1919, Gandhiji put Hindu-Muslim unity in the forefront of our national programme. For twentytwo long years this one of the greatest men in history has ceaselessly worked for it. He toiled for the Khilafat. He fasted for Muslim friendliness. He taught millions of us to retain a national attitude under unspeakable provocation.

But what is the situation today? He is held up as an enemy of Islamic ambitions. Modern Indian nationalism, of which he is the architect, is being sabotaged. Sukkur, Dacca, Sarghoda are but violent reminders of the danger in store for the country. The Disruptionists prevented the country from taking a big step forward on the road to Swaraj in 1939-40. The distrust between the two communities was never greater than now.

It is no use ignoring facts. Disruption and national integration are a contradiction in terms. India will never get a step nearer national freedom unless the separatist movement is successfully met. For, let us not forget that both Hindus and Muslims are indivisible parts of a single organism. This realization, therefore, has to be brought home to the Disruptionists. When Disruptionism is overcome, Swaraj will follow.

If the Disruptionists speak the language of Hitler less and of reasonable men more, we can easily restore harmony of national life. Ours is a land of toleration and mutual adjustment. In the past we have never thought in terms of majority and minority. Our culture admits the right of independent cultural development to every section within the frame work of an all India interdependence. With us unity is not intolerant uniformity, as in the West. But the language of appeasement has no appeal for the Disruptionists. In order to win them over you must command their respect. Indians must know to yield to no threats. We are here in this land by right of birth. We want to preserve it intact, for round it have been woven the associations of a Holy Land. There are causes which can be surrendered to no threat, abandoned for no logic. And the

integrity of our land is the greatest of such causes.

What have been the causes which have brought this importance to the Disruptionists? The British of course are responsible in the first instance; but even they could not have succeeded in giving them importance had it not been for the latent existence of an urge.

This urge is not the product of the Muslim mass-mind or of Muslim history; the Muslim masses, in many parts of India, still live happily with the Hindus. But it is born of the ambition of the Disruptionists to revive the days of Muslim domination in India rather than build up national greatness on the joint efforts of both Hindus and Muslims. They have felt it to be their destiny. They are inspired by a new vision.

This vision is not a figment of the imagination. It is based on a calculated estimate of our weaknesses. We are timid. We are disorganised. We lack the heroic fervour to stand by Truth, and to die for it. I lay the blame of the Pakistan movement, not so much upon the Disruptionists, but on the rest of us who have by our inability to unite and stand firm by our convictions opened up a prospect of easy conquest.

I know there will be many amongst you who will question the truth of what I am stating. But, however unpalatable the truth, I must say it: From cut of the weakness of the Hindus and the Sikhs the Disruptionists want to erect a throne for themselves in this country.

If you have any doubts, I will ask you to ponder over a few straightforward questions:

Have you, the Punjabis, the most vitally concerned of all people in India, presented a united front against Disruption? Between Hindus and Sikhs you are 1.13 crores in the Punjab; you have not been able to join hands so far, even when the integrity of the land is in danger. The Sanatanists and the Arya Samajists in the Punjab stand apart. The Sikhs and the Hindus have yet to make up their quarrels. The high-class Hindus and the Harijans have not bridged the gulf which separates them.

I ask further: Why have the Nationalist Muslims not approached the Muslim masses telling them of the dangers of disruption? Why have they not condemned from every platform the excesses which their co-religionists have perpetrated against the Hindus at Sukkur, Dacca, Ahmedabad and Sarghoda?

I ask still further: Why does not every man in this country get himself ready to stand firm for the land which he loves? There are hundreds and thousands of institutions in this country which work for the physical redemption of our race, but they have not been co-ordinated so as to teach our young men to stand firm and serve the integrity of the land they worship.

I ask again: How is it that we have lost the art of resistance? We bend our knees to the foreigner; we tremble before the threats of the bully; we decide to live at any cost, even at the cost of self respect. Why do we not make up our minds, as all great people have done, that on the question of the integrity of the country there can be no wavering, no compromise?

The Disruptionists depend upon the British to divide the country for them. Mr. Jinnah went so far as to give the British a warning that if they won't divide the country someone else would. The British have strengthened the unity of this country for over a century for their own benefit. As things stand at present, they will not be a party to India's disruption after the War for the benefit of the Disruptionists. To them a single India is too valuable to be lost for reasons of temporary diplomacy. But one cannot be sure.

It will be foolish to rule out the possibility of the British diplomacy, in the name of minorities or any one of the political shibboleths of Western Imperialism, trying to set India on the path of disruption.

I welcome the day when attempts will be made to force disruption on us. Then the strength and the power of resistance which the hypnotism of British rule has robbed us of, will return to us. Then we will have nothing but our innate power and tenacity left. Then we will not quarrel among ourselves over party elections, over the loaves and fishes of office, over the things of this world. It will be the hour of our supreme trial; and the hour of our triumph, too. There will be no mistaking of the issues then. We will then acquit ourselves like men, not slaves; for, then we would have known what it is to live and die for the Motherland.

You know what Akhand Hindustan stands for. It stands for the stupendous phenomenon of Indian culture: the culture born in prehistoric times, growing from strength to strength through the vicissitudes of six thousand years; gathering speed, intensity and expanse; rolling down the stretches of time like Mother Ganges during the floods. It stands for the supreme message of deli-

verance of the human race: the message of life over death, of the triumph of ideas over appetites, of the victory of the moral order over the law of the jungle which the world worships; of the ultimate vindication of the Divine in man.

I know that this message is immortal; I know too that Akhand Hindustan, the living embodiment of this message, will not, cannot die.

XI

"Histories" of India

THERE are a number of works bearing the title "History of India"; there are plenty of monographs on its special subjects; but the progress of India through the ages is still to be presented in a proper perspective and with an Indian outlook. The time has arrived when India is entitled to have histories written afresh from an Indian point of view. A nation's evolution can rightly be understood only by those who can appreciate the genius behind its historical development.

A history of India, in the first instance, means the history of that country which we, in modern times, know as India; not of a kingdom, a race, a community or a conquering corporation; nor of an India defined by fluctuating political boundaries. For the purposes of history, India cannot, therefore, mean the India under British rule; the Hindustan of Muslim chroniclers; or the Indoi of

the Greeks; or the Aryavarta as recognised by the authors of any particular century.

The word 'country' has a deeper significance than merely the space enclosed within geographical boundaries or those created by political conquests. A country, no doubt, has for its basis a unit created by nature, not by man. India as a distinct country is formed by the Himalayas and the Hindukush, the Vindhya and the Ghats, and the sea line from Karachi to Calcutta. This is not a new conception; it was known to ancient writers who defined its boundaries. This India alone can be the scientific basis of its history. Its physical features are sufficiently distinctive to separate it from the surrounding territories and have been determinative of the physique, outlook, life and culture of persons residing in it.

The test of a country's distinctiveness is therefore the existence of characteristic geographical determinants which shape its life, for it is those determinants which completely mark off, say, the Indian from the Chinese, the Afghan and the Persian.

No doubt India is a country because of its geographical distinctiveness; but it is something more than and distinct from the part of the earth geographically called India. A country is a unity

conceived in terms of its inhabitants created not only by geographical determinants, but by historical vicissitudes and the imponderable forces which shape social life and institutions. Most of our histories are chronicles of one province or the other; of some ruling dynasties; of the kingdom of Delhi; of the rise and fall of the Moghul Empire or of the rise of the British Empire and its stabilisation. Despite their tempting titles, every one of them falls far short of being the true history of India.

A proper history of India cannot be merely the story of the exploits of its kings or conquerors: that would be the province of historical romances or laudatory works by court chroniclers. Such exploits no doubt would form part of the history of the country but only in so far as they enrich the race memory of the country by creating traditions which shape and stimulate collective action.

A proper history, again, cannot mean only a record of the rise and fall of states within a country unless they have a determinative influence on the life and future of the people. Such a history cannot exclude a record of the literature, thought and culture which are vital facets of a people's life; nor a survey of its social and

political institutions, for they provide the regulative structure within which the people live, move and have their being.

To be a history in the true sense of the word the work must be the story of the people inhabiting a country. It must be a record of their life from age to age presented through the life and achievement of men whose exploits become the beacon lights of tradition; through characteristic reaction of the people to physical and economic conditions; through political change and vicissitudes which create the forces and conditions which operate upon life; through characteristic social institutions, beliefs and forms; through literary and artistic achievements; through the movements of thought which from time to time helped or hindered the growth of collective harmony; through those values which the people have accepted or reacted to and which created or shaped their collective will through the efforts of the people to will themselves into an organic unity. The central purpose of a history must, therefore, be to investigate and unfold the values which age after age have inspired the inhabitants of a country to develop their collective will and to express it through the manifold activities of their life. Such a history of India is still to be written.

Most of our histories of India suffer from a lack of perspective. They deal with certain events and periods not from the Indian point of view, but from that of some source to which they are partial and which by its very nature is loaded against India. The treatments of such events and periods become disproportionately large and detailed, leaving a distorted impression of the times.

To take an instance, the *Cambridge Shorter History of India* edited by Mr. Dodwell, one of the best written of our histories, consists of three parts.

Part I which deals with a period commencing before 2000 B.C. and ending by about 1000 A.D. is hurriedly sketched in 201 pages. This part does not give the history of a people, but a narrative of a few kings and their conquests unrelated to the collective life of India.

Part II is not a history of India at all. It is a narrative of Muslim conquests largely based on material supplied by the admirers of the conquerors. This is certainly not a history of the people of India who resisted the foreign invaders and absorbed them in the life of the country. It does not give the picture of how the Indians reacted to the vicissitudes which befell the country

between 1186 and 1400 A.D., nor of the great synthesis which arose in the country as a result of the Muslim impact.

Part III entitled "British India" takes up 421 pages and can more correctly be styled the history of European conquests in India. Out of 908 pages of the book, 386 are taken up with the achievements of the British from 1740 to 1920. These pages do not give us what the real India was during the last 180 years; what it saw, felt and suffered; how it reacted and adjusted to foreign influence; and what organisation and values it created out of the impact. The historian stands outside India and tells us of what others did to India. What India did to others or with herself receives little attention. Surely this is not a history of India.

This lack of perspective arises from the inability of the historian to keep before his mind the central fact that the subject of treatment is India and not any specific set of conquests. It also arises by giving undue importance to the well preserved annals of outside countries, thus giving the history of this country the form of achievements by those who claim to have conquered the country and whose admirers were fortunate enough to have their works preserved by time.

It could be said for such treatment that at present there are not sufficient materials available for an even treatment of all periods of Indian history. This is no doubt partially true. But the episodes on which foreign materials are plentiful should be treated in a separate book or note, and not as parts of a history of the country which has to be viewed from its own point of view and with a true sense of perspective.

For instance, again, out of 27 pages in the *Shorter Cambridge History* which deal with the rise of the first great Indian Empire (700 B.C.—149 B.C.) so many as seven pages are devoted to an unsuccessful raid on a slice of the country by a Greek invader which lasted only for some months and left no permanent impression behind. This kind of treatment is sure to result in a distorted view of the history of the period. The same could be said of the last 175 pages which look very much like a summary of the administrative reports of the Government of India from 1858 to 1919, in which we find Dadabhai Naoroji referred to not even once and Mahatma Gandhi only once and that as 'Mr. M. R. Gandhi'!

XII

Organic Periods of India's Past

A TRUE historical perspective can be maintained only under certain conditions:

(*a*) Attention must first be given to materials available in India.

(*b*) Foreign sources should be scrupulously examined and tested with reference to Indian sources. Episodes should not be given disproportionate importance just because ample materials are available for dealing with them at length.

(c) The history should be divided into periods which are *organic.*

A period may be called organic only when it begins with the coming into operation of new forces and conditions; when throughout that period the same forces and conditions continue to influence the country; and when at its end those forces and conditions lose their strength and vitality.

Dynastic changes, if they do not materially bring into play new forces, are not sufficient to justify the splitting up of a period.

FIRST PERIOD:

The Early Aryan Conquests: The Birth of Indian Culture.

The first period of our history would cover a period from Divodasa to Sisunaga.

The contempt in which historical traditions in India are held by some scholars is largely responsible for a sketchy treatment of our early period during which the foundations of social structure and culture were laid. This contempt is all the more unmerited because of the vast material which the labours of Indian and European scholars have now brought to the surface.

From the wars of Divodasa to Sisunaga, possibly a period of about 1,000 years, the life in the country was organised by collective effort on the part of the whole community.

The history of this period will have to deal first with the language, and the people called Aryans, and their home. The principal features of this period are: the rise and growth of Aryan power; the early social and religious institutions of the people; the birth of the values which later shaped the Indian culture; the tribes which

merged into one homogeneous people; the Dasyus and their relations with the Aryans; Divodasa's conquest of Sambara; the civil war between Vasistha and Visvamitra and the Dasarajna; the Haihaya power and the foundation of Mahismati by Sahasrarjuna; its destruction by Rama the Bhrgu; the rise of Janamejaya, the son of Pariksita and the fall of Kurus and Janaka of Videha; the spread of Aryan power and culture upto the Narmada; the social and religious adjustments consequent on this conquest; the consolidation of the Bharatas; the birth of social and religious institutions, castes, Asramas and Yajnas; Aryan colonization of the south.

During this period the conditions were created by :

(*a*) the victorious advance of Aryans;
(*b*) the impact between the Aryan and the non-Aryan cultures;
(*c*) the new social adjustment between the Aryans and the non-Aryans;
(*d*) the spread of the values on which the Aryan culture was based.

SECOND PERIOD:

The First Empire of India: the Age of Organisation.

A distinct period of history begins from Sisu-

naga (7th century B.C.), who founded an empire and ruled from Jarasandha's capital, Rajagrha, near Patna, and ends with Pusyamitra (149 B.C.). It is a period of about 500 years of more or less continuous imperial sway notwithstanding dynastic changes and would attest to a record of power, organisation and culture.

Bimbisara (540-490 B.C.) and Ajatasatru (490-460 B.C.), Candragupta (322 B.C.), Asoka (274 or 273-232 B.C.) and Pusyamitra (185-149 B.C.) were not solitary conquerors, but some of a series of great empire builders who maintained an unbroken continuity of imperial rule.

When the period commenced, the Mahajanapadas were at the height of their power. The philosophic tendencies which later moulded the cultural outlook would begin about the same time with Kapila. It was also the age of *Srauta* and *Grhya-Sutras*; of the growth of Puranic literature; of the institutes beginning from Manu and ending with Yajnavalkya; of linguistic achievements as seen in Panini and Bhasa.

From the Indian point of view, this is the first period of political, social and religious organisation on an all-India basis. Persian and Greek raids would be the incidents, and not the main theme of this period. The death of Pusyamitra

synchronised with the disappearance of the dominant position of Magadha. A new era was then ushered in.

Correlated annals of this unbroken greatness seen on the background of Indian life should constitute a history of the period; not fragmentary notes on Indian dynasties shaded at intervals with the lines of foreign raids disproportionately broad and long.

But our historians generally split up this age into three or four dynastic periods and draw on Greek materials to enlarge a temporary raid by a great Greek invader and his hurried withdrawal from the country into a historical episode overshadowing everything, and thus destroy a true perspective.

During this period the conditions were created by:

(*a*) the existence in the country of one predominant military and political agency;

(*b*) the spread of the Indian culture as a world culture;

(*c*) the organisation of society into interdependent castes instead of races throughout the country;

(*d*) the expression of culture through art, literature and codes;

(*e*) the intellectual impulse generated by an urge to solve the problems of human bondage and misery, leading to great humanitarian movements.

Some histories still enliven the history of this period by the purple patch of what is called the invasion of India by Darius. If it took place at all it was a temporary frontier encroachment on the Indian soil. In two inscriptions praising his greatness the court historian mentions 'India' as the twentieth Satrapi of his empire. India in this record did not mean modern India; it meant the Indus region. According to Vincent Smith. it must have comprised of the course of Indus from Kalabag to the sea at the highest, a slice of the modern Punjab and Sind. There are no materials to establish that the Indus valley formed part of the empire of Darius till 516 B.C. nor is there any evidence to show how long it continued to form part of the empire after the death of Darius. One fact, however, is certain that Darius did not cross the Indus or come in contact with the growing power of Magadha.

Alexander's invasion, in fact, consisted of :

(*a*) a raid on the Punjab, undertaken possibly to help the Hindu king of Gandhara;

(*b*) the defeat of some kings and tribes which occupied parts of the province;

(*c*) advance upto the Bias and a hasty retreat by the sea without venturing to measure strength with the Imperial Nandas;

(*d*) the recognition of Poros of the Punjab and Ambhi of Taksasila as independent kings;

(*e*) expulsion of Greek forces by Candragupta.

This so-called invasion was, however, but a raid of a part of the modern Punjab successfully repulsed by Indians possibly under the enterprising lead of the young chieftain Candragupta. But the victory of this Indian warrior becomes in the hands of our historians a brief epilogue to an epic account of the Greek valour.

This obscure conqueror, it must be noted, then became an emperor; brought the whole of India under his sway; inflicted on Alexander's successor, Seleucus, when he sought to retrieve the lost honour of the Greeks, a crushing defeat and annexed a large part of Ariana to his empire.

THIRD PERIOD:

Age of International Contacts and Cultural Expansion.

(150 B.C.—320 A.D.)

The third period would begin with the decline

of the Sunga power and would end about 320 A.D. when Candragupta I founded the Gupta Empire.

It was an age of international contacts, and cultural expansion; of the spread of the great religions, cultural movements, Saivism, Buddhism, Bhagavatadharma and Jainism in and out of India; of extensive cultural contact with Tamil Nad, Ceylon and Andhra (2nd century B.C.) and the colonisation of outlying parts.

Politically it was a struggle for supremacy between different kingdoms. It saw the rise of several great kingdoms under Kharavela of Kalinga (c.. 150 B.C.) under the Andhra Satakarnis (c. 200 B.C. to c. 250 A.D.) and later of the rise of the Nagas, Bharasaivas; Pallavas and the Vakatakas. It saw the raids of the Scythians, Indo-Parthians and Indo-Bactrians and their complete absorption in Indian society; of the Yueh-chis under their great leaders, Wima Kadphises (78 A.D.) and Kaniska; of the Western Ksatrapas and their successors. It saw also their absorption in the life of the country.

During this period the conditions were created by:

(a) the absence of any central political and military control;

(b) the invasion by, and the absorption of, foreign races;

(c) the spread of Indian intellectual, religious and cultural movements in and outside the country, and the consequent birth of greater India.

FOURTH PERIOD:

The Second Indian Empire (320 A.D. to 650 A.D.): **The Golden Age of India.**

This is one continuous period of power, strength and culture. The era commenced with Chandragupta I. It reached its zenith in the reigns of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II, the Vikramaditya. His imperial line ended with Buddhagupta in 500 A.D. There is, however, no justification for the conclusion that the line of emperors became extinct with him. There is evidence that there was an unbroken succession of imperial Guptas.

500 A.D.	Death of Buddhagupta.
510	Battle of Airakina between Bhanugupta Baladitya and the Huns.
510-511 A.D.	Succession of Bhanugupta Baladitya II.
511-512	Fall of Malwa; Toramana, the Hun in Magadha.

512-526	Mihirakula emperor of Northern India.
527	Defeat and Capture of Mihirakula by Baladitya II.
530-535	Yasovarman Visnuvardhana acquires imperial sway.
535-550	Kumaragupta III succeeds.
550-554	Isanavarman of Maukharis holds imperial sway.
554-570	Sarvavarman.
600-605	Prabhakaravarman of Thanesvar.
606-646	Harsavardhana becomes Emperor.

This period saw great achievements in the field of literature, art, science and architecture. It saw the rise of Bhagavatadharma and Puranic movements to their zenith and the consolidation of the administrative, political and social structure which maintained the integrity of Indian life in spite of later vicissitudes.

Pataliputra and Ujjayini became the twin metropolis of India under this dynasty, from where the whole of the country north of the Narmada was directly governed. This period is one and continuous, broken up only by the temporary raids of the Huns. The Imperial structure which the Guptas had built up, however, remained unbroken. Progress of science was maintained. The

literature, art and culture evolving on their own lines reached their height and no new forces or conditions came into existence.

The Vakatakas (first half of the 5th cent. A.D. to the middle of the 6th cent. A.D.), once the allies of the Guptas, were powerful in the centre, the Pallavas (350-740 A.D.) in the south.

The South saw a renaissance on account of the impact of the northern cultural forces, and Indian culture continued to spread to foreign lands.

During this period the conditions were created by:

(a) the existence of a central political and military power and the consequent strengthening of the social and economic organisation;

(b) the intensification of all intellectual, religious and cultural movements of the country and the growth of their distinctive national aspects;

(c) the organisation of Caturvarnya as more effective but less fluid social institution;

(d) the growth of the Bharatavarsa consciousness;

(e) the comparative immunity from external irruptions and internal dissensions.

FIFTH PERIOD:

Struggle for Imperial Sway: Age of Cultural Stagnation.

(650 A.D.—1175 A.D.)

The next period would begin about 650 with the disappearance of the Empire of Sri Harsa and would end with 1175 when Muhammad of Ghur first invaded India. It saw the rise of various kingdoms: of Nepal (600-1325); of Kashmir (630-1339); of the Gurjars of Kanauj and the Gurjara Pratihara empire (700-1027); of Rastrakutas (8th century—973); of Cauhans (8th century—1301); of Pala kings of Bengal (735-1199); of the Chalukyas of Gujarat (961-1297) and Dakkhan (550-1190); of Colas (8th century—1074); of Pandyas (700-920); of Kadambas (340-1327); of Kalingas; of Kalachuris of Chedi (9th-12th cent.) and the Chandels of Jejakabhukti (9th century—1203); and of Paramaras of Malwa (9th century—1065).

This age saw the invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, which provides a glorious record of Indian resistance. In spite of a short-lived occupation of a part of the North-West by foreigners, the country on the whole remained undisturbed by them. Life continued as before; no new forces or conditions came into existence.

During this period the conditions were created by:

(a) unsuccessful struggle for imperial supremacy by kings of many provinces;

(b) the birth of provincial consciousness as a result of provincial rivalries and struggles;

(c) the stagnation of the intellectual, religious and literary forces in the country;

(d) the spread of these forces in the interior of each province as each provincial capital tried to be a centre of culture.

SIXTH PERIOD:

The age of Resistance and Cultural Decadence.

(1175 A.D.—1400 A.D.)

This period of history begins about 1175 when Mahmud Ghori first invaded India and ends with the destruction of the kingdom of Delhi by Taimur in 1399. From the Indian point of view this is clearly the age of resistance; of fearful impact between the Indian and foreign elements; and of cultural decadence. During this period Indian kings resisted foreign invasions tenaciously. The kingdom of Delhi was founded; but in spite of the strenuous efforts, it could not be converted into an Empire. New kings who owed no allegiance to Indian culture swayed the sceptre of

Indian kings. Buddhism disappeared from the land. New social and cultural problems arose and were adjusted. People migrated to the South in search of security. In the South this was an era of the empire of Hoysalas, Colas, and Vijayanagar.

The conditions during this period were created by:

(a) foreign invasions and the founding of the central military camp at Delhi by foreigners;

(b) drastic changes in the technique of warfare, involving recurring disasters to the people and vast inter-provincial migrations in search of safety;

(c) the destruction of the schools of culture in their capitals;

(d) the protective stiffening of the social framework;

(e) displacement of Sanskrit as the language of Courts in provinces ruled by Muslims;

(f) impact between the Indian and Persian cultures; and

(g) the coming into existence of an Indian community which respected no canon or sanction universally accepted so far in India.

SEVENTH PERIOD:

The Third Empire of India: The Age of New Adjustments: The Renaissance.

(1399 A.D.—1700 A.D.)

Breaking up of the kingdom of Delhi. Kingdoms of the South: Gujarat, Khandesh and Malwa. Rise of Vijayanagar. Intercourse between the two communities: Hindu and Muslim.

Birth of Hindi language. The Indo-Muslim culture of the North.

The movement from Ramanand to Raidas is one and uniform, absorbing foreign elements and reasserting the essential values of Indian Culture. Ramanand (1350), Kabira (1396-1519); Raidas; Guru Nanak (1469-1545), Tulsidas (1532-1623). *Bhakti*: Madhvendra (c. 1485), Caitanya (1486-1533), Vallabha (1479-1531), Sanatana and Rupagoswami. Literary renaissance in the Indian languages.

Akbar to Shahjahan (1556-1658). Akbar's cultural synthesis. Indian renaissance at the zenith. Hindu Muslim co-operation in founding the empire.

Aurangzeb's sectarian bias (1658-1707), the fall of the Moghul Empire and the rise of Shivaji.

The conditions during this period were created by:

(a) the sympathetic intercourse between Muslims and Hindus and the absence of alignments on purely religious basis;

(b) the military and political domination of the Moghul Empire based on a close co-operation between Hindus and Muslims and the comparative control over provincial strife;

(c) the segregation of the political influence into the narrowest possible compass;

(d) a new renaissance and the birth of new intellectual religious and cultural forces in the country;

(e) economic revival;

(f) the stabilisation of life.

EIGHTH PERIOD:

The Age of Cultural Decadence: Struggle for Imperial Power between Hindus and the British: British Conquest of India.

(1700 A.D.—1857 A.D.)

Attempts were made from 1675 to found Hindu empires in the country. In 1674 Shivaji was crowned king. In 1675 Guru Govindsingh founded the Khalsa. In 1681, the Rajputs revolted against Delhi. These efforts were ultimately destroyed in 1857 when the so-called Mutiny, which was in fact the last military struggle to throw off foreign rule, was crushed by the British.

1757 Plassey and the rise of foreign power in the country.

1761 Paniput: the break up of the Hindu effort at founding an empire.

1857 Mutiny: the end of the old epoch.

During this period the conditions were created by the chaotic state of affairs in the country on account of:

(i) the break up of the central control of the Moghul Empire;

(ii) the unsuccessful attempts of the Maratha power to found a predominant authority in the country;

(iii) the attempts of foreign powers to found such an authority and the success of British attempts.

NINTH PERIOD:

The Rise of Nationalism: The Age of Foreign Domination.

(1858 A.D.—1940 A.D.)

The birth of new conditions and forces. The problems of peace under the foreign army of occupation.

Cultural and intellectual impact between India and the West. A new renaissance. New Cultural synthesis: Ram Mohan Roy to Mahatma Gandhi.

Congress: (1885-1940). The rise of Nationalism.

The strengthening of collective will. Political struggles. A fresh struggle for Independence. The influence of British liberalism and reorganisation of mass life.

The conditions during this period were created by:

(a) peace and protective unity imposed by the British;

(b) the economic draining of the country and the changes in the standard of life;

(c) the impact of Western Culture and the birth of new and intensive intellectual and cultural forces resulting in a renaissance;

(d) closer contact between all parts of the country under modern conditions;

(e) the birth of Indian Nationalism and the collective attempt at securing political freedom;

(f) as an antithesis to (e) the strengthening of provincial and communal consciousness as political forces;

(g) international influences.

XIII

An Age Of Resistance

THE treatment of the Arab invasion by Muhammad bin Kasim (712) and the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni in our present histories show considerable lack of perspective.

Muhammad bin Kasim established Arab authority in Sind which, however, was overthrown in 871 A.D.

Again, if properly examined and tested, many of the exploits of Mahmud of Ghazni were military raids, the nature and extent of which are only attested in the first instance by the court historians of Ghazni and later by devout Muslim chroniclers whose knowledge was one-sided, and whose outlook acquired by a desire to satisfy the pride of their masters or the zeal of bigots.

From the Indian point of view Jaipal's and his sons' resistance to the overwhelming forces of Mahmud is a glorious chapter in our history. In

spite of his military genius and his overwhelming army the great conqueror could only annex a part of the Punjab to his empire and was fiercely opposed by a confederacy of Northern Indian kings, which succeeded in forcing him back and rendering India immune from foreign invasions till 1175. Within fifteen years of his death a considerable portion of his acquisitions was recaptured.

Mahmud, no doubt, looted temples and broke idols when on his raiding incursion. But iconoclastic zeal was not his principal motive as suggested by Muslim chroniclers; it was conquest. First, he did annex the Punjab where he could do so; secondly, he was not a fanatic and not anti-Hindu. Hindus played an important part in his victories over Ilak Khan. He allowed Hindus to observe their religious observances in Ghazni itself. Sewan Rai and Tilak were his trusted Hindu generals. Later annals written by enthusiasts to paint Mahmud 'the sword of Islam' evidently had to supply the motive of iconoclastic zeal to cover the basic fact that his raids, in spite of superhuman efforts, did not result in conquest.

Take for instance Mahmud's invasion of Somanatha. A critical examination of the authorities

both Indian and foreign justify only the following conclusions.

(a) About 1025 Mahmud invaded Gujarata passing through a desert rather than face the Indian kings to his left;

(b) He had to return through the desert of Kaccha as he was pressed in the rear by the forces of Bhima of Anahilvad Patana;

(c) He looted the temple of Somanatha at Prabhasa;

(d) The political continuity of Gujarata through which he passed continued exactly as before. The interruption was not sufficient to be noticed by the Indian historians, Hemacandra (1089-1173), Somesvara (1184-1254) and Merutunga (c. 1306).

(e) After the invasions, Bhima was powerful, entrenched in authority in Gujarata, Saurastra and Kaccha. His grant of a village in Kaccha in 1030 A.D. and the completion of Adinatha's temple at Abu by his minister Vimala in 1032 A.D. prove that Gujarata took no time to recover from the shock of the invasion, even if one was administered.

The invasion of Somanatha has many elements

common with Napoleon's march to and retreat from Moscow. Both were ambitious raids; both ended in disaster. Napoleon had only to face nature; Mahmud preferred to face the wrath of nature rather than his enemies. But in describing the march to Moscow the Russian historians would not take the French point of view. In India, however, Indian historians write from the point of view of the admirers of the invader.

THE KINGDOM OF DELHI
(1186-1300)

During this period the kingdom of Delhi became a new factor in history. First, it was a kingdom which derived its momentum from outside the country; secondly, it was dominated by foreign element and outlook; thirdly, it was characterized by a technique different from what prevailed before.

After Kaniska (1st century A.D.), Kutbuddin Aibak's (1196-1210) was the first successful attempt by foreigners to found a kingdom. The attempt took the shape of military raids by Muhammad Ghori, first from Bhur (1175), next from Budaun (1189), and then from Delhi (1193). In 1210 when Aibak died the kingdom comprised only of Delhi, Ajmere, Budaun and the surround-

ing tracts, and of military camps at Hansi, Meerut and Sialkot. Sind was then independent under the Sumra kings, who were Rajput converts. Multan, the Punjab and Bengal had declared themselves independent. The Hindus of Delhi, Budaun, Oudh and Benares had already commenced a struggle for independence.

Iltutmish (1211-1236) had to spend twenty-five years of unabated effort to re-establish temporary military supremacy over some of the resisting Indian kings. His conquests, like Aibak's, were ceaseless military operations made with the aid of foreign mercenaries or armies locally raised. On his death the Muslim military governors of Oudh, Budaun, Multan, Hansi, Lahore and Bengal threw in their lot with the people and became independent of Delhi.

The kingdom of Delhi acquired a sort of imperial status in the time of Allauddin Khilji (1296-1316) and Mahmud Tughlukh (1325-1351). But theirs also were military operations against rebellious governors and resisting Hindu kings. They could not keep back the raiding Moghuls who broke into the country time and again. On their deaths, their efforts resulted in nothing but comparatively small accretions to the kingdom of Delhi. In 1398 when Taimur raided Delhi, the

kingdom of Delhi was dissolved for all practical purposes.

The kingdom of Delhi under the Saiyad and the Lodi dynasties (1414-1526) was very restricted in power. No Allauddin Khilji or Mahmud Tughlukh appeared during this century to relieve, by great military achievements, the monotony of palace intrigues and recurring revolts. A narrative of these operations, intrigues and revolts, in which the kings of Delhi spent their lives is by no means the history of India during that period.

During this period there were several kingdoms of the same size in the country as Delhi, and a few much larger, all warring with one another and swelling or shrinking with each generation. Their history is equally important.

Two new factors have to be considered, viz.: (a) the rise and growth of the conscious and unconscious processes by which India resisted or absorbed foreign influences; and (b) the appearance of changes which the new conditions wrought in Indian life.

From the Indian point of view, the country as a whole resisted the efforts at subjugation made by Delhi; and, as a result, after 213 years (1186-1399) of ceaseless effort the kings of Delhi did

not succeed in establishing anything except a small kingdom. The story of that resistance is the true political history of India of the period.

This resistance had a two-fold aspect: (a) the military resistance against subjugation; and (b) the cultural and social resistance against foreign influences.

Aibak was no doubt a foreign general who conquered territories in the interests of a foreign master, but no sooner did he conquer them than he cast his lot with the country and became the ruler of a local kingdom. Iltutmish was not the agent of any foreign power ruling in the latter's interest. He was for all purposes an Indian king. The governing oligarchy called the Forty—which once was foreign—soon lost its alien outlook. Many of its members married Indians and in the next generation lost sense of identity which they might have had with any foreign country.

The Muslim historians attribute to most of the great kings of Delhi a motive to wage a holy war for the spread of Islam. This motive attributed *ex post facto* by enthusiastic literary men of a subsequent age is not borne out by facts. Conquest, not spread of Islam, was the prime motive of these conquerors and in making and consolidating their conquests they always sought alliances

with Hindus. No doubt they relied upon religious fervour to inspire enthusiasm among their Muslim armies or to claim the loyalty of any doubtful Muslim chief. Again, no doubt conversion to Islam was a passport to favours and office, and was resorted to by the helpless or the opportunists. But on the whole, many of them do not appear to have shown any anxiety to alloy military triumphs with religious fanaticism. On the contrary, there were constant attempts to enlist the sympathy of Hindu allies and armies, and to conciliate the Hindus. In fact, these conquerors relied mainly on Indians, converts and non-converts. The foreign element in their armies was small and soon became domiciled in the country.

The military governors of the kings of Delhi were all anxious to become independent rulers of the provinces in their charge; and in many cases made peace with the local Hindu chieftains and with their aid asserted their independence. The fact that Rajput chiefs, converted or otherwise, soon rose to the highest position in the army and the government shows that the Muslim rulers did not treat themselves as foreigners nor did they generally treat Hindus as infidels to be put to the sword.

Even Allauddin Khilji to whom so many acts

of fanaticism are attributed was an Indian ruler for all purposes. He was helped as well as resisted by rulers of both communities. Arsi, the son of the sister of the Raja of Chitor was his trusted lieutenant. He married Kamaladevi, the queen of King Karan of Gujarata, and her daughter the beautiful Devaldevi was married to his son Khijr Khan. Khusraw Khan, a nominal convert to Islam, was the chief Minister of his son Mubarak and later made a successful, though short-lived, bid for the throne of Delhi. Hisam-id-din Parmar, a Rajput convert, was appointed a Governor of Gujarata.

How the ambitious Rajput chieftains exchanged faith to secure power is illustrated by the history of the family of Wajib-ul-Mulk. He was the son of the Rajput chieftain of a village near Tank his original name being Saharan. While entertaining Firuz Khan Taghlak, before he came to the throne of Delhi, Saharan and his brother Sadhu found that Firuz had been enamoured of their sister; they married her to the Prince; followed him to Delhi; and at his request, embraced Islam. Saharan was given the title of Wajib-ul-Mulk, his brother the name of Samsher Khan. Firuz himself was the son of a Rajput Princess of Dipalpur. In 1351, when Firuz became the

Sultan of Delhi, he raised Samsher and Zafar, the son of Wajib, to the dignity of nobles of his Court. In 1391, Zafar became the Governor of Gujarata; in 1403, he made his own son Mahmud the first independent king of Gujarata; in 1407, became his successor under the name of Muzaffer (1407-1411) after poisoning his son; and in turn was killed by his grandson Ahmed, the founder of Ahmedabad. These converts to the conqueror's faith wore their religion in much the same fashion as the ambitious of yesterday accepted European habits of dress and life to secure a safe position under British rulers. They retained Hindu habits and belief, and had it not been for the pride of pure ancestry, which prevented the Rajputs from accepting any but those of the purest descent into the sphere of their social intercourse, these converts would have soon returned to their ancestral fold.

The rule of Delhi was therefore not a foreign rule, nor did a whole race of foreigners come into India and establish the kingdom. The Muslim founders of the kingdom like those of Delhi, Bengal, Gujarata or Sind were not, and did not treat themselves as aliens. The foreign element, which was very small, was soon absorbed and except for a different faith which these rulers

and their supporters wore, they were as much Indians as those who adhered to their ancestral faith. That there was sympathetic intercourse between the Muslims and the Hindus is unquestioned. Amir Khrusru, at the Court of Allaudin, had already expressed the feeling, "you should look on Hindustan as Paradise."

Further, in spite of protracted military operations, the net result of this period was the Kingdom of Delhi; a very fluctuating entity; a military camp growing into the seat of an evanescent empire under a powerful king and shrinking into a fortress in which the so-called Sultan exercised an attenuated authority with the help of Indian and foreign mercenaries.

The Muslim conquests of this period can be classified into:

(a) Temporary raids of foreign conquerors like Mahmud of Ghazni with armies which were predominantly foreign.

(b) Foreign military chiefs like Aibak setting up a kingdom in India with armies consisting of foreigners and Indians and becoming Indian rulers for all practical purposes.

(c) Indian army leaders like Zafarkhan in alliance with local military chiefs setting

up kingdoms, and governing their kingdom practically with existing local administrative machinery.

During these three centuries the life of the people continued to run its accustomed course except when it was temporarily, though rudely, disturbed by the armies of the kings of Delhi, which disturbance generally left a trail of destruction behind.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE AGE OF RESISTANCE. (1175-1400)

It will be interesting to investigate into the problems:

(*a*) How did India so far fail to grow into one political unity?

(*b*) How could it resist but not overcome the attempts of the kingdom of Delhi?

(*c*) And, how, in spite of military disasters, was the continuity of life and culture preserved?

The reply to these questions can only be sought in the life of the people as reflected in the social institutions and cultural values which had grown up during a period of over 200 years.

The Indian concept of the kingship, in sharp

contrast with the concept of a totalitarian state, left almost all human activities, except that of carrying on a war, outside its scope.

Every village had its economic integrity maintained by hereditary officials. Every town had its *mahajan* which concerned itself with social and commercial matters. Every caste enjoyed an autonomy not only in matters domestic and social, but even in many matters relating to civil law and a kind of criminal jurisdiction. Human relations in general were regulated by customs or rules which had behind them the authority of Smrtis. These codes of law, next to the Vedas, were held in the highest sanctity. None but a very learned Brahmin could write a new code, and Parisad of Brahmins could only interpret its tenets. The custom and the dicta of the Srtis needed no sanction from the king, for social disapproval and ostracism provided effective deterrents.

There was again that overarching regulative structure, the *Varnasramadharma*, which had organised life throughout the country.

Foreigners have misunderstood caste system and we who have learnt at their feet in our Westernised universities have failed to appreciate the spirit and nature both of the concept and the reality.

The Brahmins formed the great unifying and organisational force throughout the country. As a class they cultivated religion, learning and culture and lived in and through Sanskrit, the sacred vehicle which represented all the three. They interpreted the law, guided justice accordingly, and influenced the courts with their wisdom and statesmanship. They provided spiritual solace and mundane guidance to all. They studied and sought the values handed to them of old. They also provided in most cases the civil power in the State. It was open to a new king to dismiss a set of Brahmana Ministers but he had to have others, who, howsoever docile or convenient, could not, by the very nature of their outlook, training and background, prove traitors to the heritage of culture and wisdom of their country. If they attempted to do so they forfeited the confidence and respect of the community. No doubt many Brahmanas exploited their position for worldly good, but the traditions of the caste emphasized purity and selflessness, and those who proved untrue to them soon lost their position.

Varnasramadharma relegated the martial element to the Ksatriya class. The Ksatriyas or rather the Rajanyas, as they were originally called, were from the beginning the protectors of

the society. The kings, the professional warriors and members of the other castes who became fighters by inclination or necessity, lived on fighting. We hear of Brahmana kings and Vaisya warriors, but if these adopted the profession of fighting they had to accept the traditions of that caste without the benefit of a definite place in it by inter-marriage. The foreign fighters who came in the wake of military leaders stayed in the country to become Ksatriyas and found a place in the genealogies of Aryan ancestors. For instance, the Scythians were first accepted as degenerate Ksatriyas and were then completely absorbed.

The Brahmanas and the Ksatriyas were interdependent. Kautilya and Candragupta, the preceptor-Minister and the pupil-King represent an age-long institution in India which has produced the wonderful traditions of Hindu rule and has saved the people of this country for centuries from the horrors of the perpetual strife which the kings waged in India.

The king could not interfere with the customary laws, nor disregard the ancient codes. His duties, if he was inclined to be dutiful, were laid down since the days when Bhisma spoke of them from his death-bed of arrows on the battle field

of Kuruksetra. He had to protect the people, punish the offenders and uphold Dharma. He could declare war on his neighbour but could not force conscription on non-Ksatriyas. He was the protector of shrines, of Brahmanas, women and cattle, and could not hurt them, no matter to which side they belonged. Destruction of non-combatants was prohibited even from the days of Megasthenes, no matter who they were. A king even if captured was not to be killed in cold blood.

When a conqueror became a new king, he brought with him his own Ksatriya kinsmen to whom the great fiefs were distributed; his own Brahmanas took the high offices of State. But the new fief holders received the allegiance of the old hereditary Jagirdars and rarely sought to displace them. The Brahmana ministers adjusted themselves to the schools of learning and law in the kingdom. It became their duty to see that they were donated more munificently than in the time of their predecessors. The old feudal hierarchy which exercised the functions of police officers in the towns and villages functioned as before. Thus, however drastic the change of personnel among the ruler and his immediate advisers and followers—the upper ones—, it made

but little impression on the vast fabric of life which went its normal way below it.

This explains how, in spite of what to us looks like incessant wars between innumerable kings for centuries throughout the whole country, culture was never thwarted, and life remained well organised and happy. The different communities went about their activities in the usual way. The villages remained practically undisturbed.

This segregation of military activities was achieved with great success. A war was a regulated tournament between two sets of professional combatants, not an all-in wrestle for life or death. Ordinarily its consequence was not the annexation of the territory of the vanquished, but allegiance and tribute. Dynastic changes involved just about the same derangement which the change of a party government in some of the States in U.S.A. involves. Patronage only passed from one group to another but without disturbing the great fief holders upon whose goodwill the new king hoped to rest his power. More often than not the intellectual, religious and cultural activities were accelerated, for the new ruler had to justify his existence by greater munificence. It is not surprising that under the influence of this concep-

tion India did not feel the need of a super state. Empire in India was only a military suzerainty created by an ambitious warrior-king for a short period.

The country was one, the culture uniform, and the social organisation tough and resilient. The wars brought changes in dynasties, but not any worth the name in life. The existence of military castes in each kingdom prevented the formation of a large standing army which is the *sine qua non* of a military empire. But what the historian of India has to present is the great phenomenon from Sahasrarjuna to Prthviraja that life not only remained unbroken, but grew stronger and tougher, in spite of the incessant wars all over the country.

Though equipped with a homogeneous culture and a marvellous social organisation, this country had no powerful centralised military organisation to resist the hordes of central Asia commanded by great military leaders who were attracted to India by the lure of wealth and conquest. To these invaders, nothing was sacred. Padmanabha described graphically the onrush of Allaudin Khilji's army: "The conquering army burnt villages", the poet says, "devastated the land, plundered people's wealth; took Brahmanas, children

and women of all castes captive, and flogged them with thongs of raw hide; carried a moving prison with it, and converted the prisoners into obsequious Turks."

Naturally the humane methods of warfare with which the fighting classes in India were familiar were no match for this fierce onslaught. The Rajputs, the heroes that they were, fell fighting. Their fortresses fell like card houses. Their womenfolk immolated themselves preferring death to dishonour. But fresh heroes sprang to take the place of the dead and broke the volume and momentum of the onrushing tide of invasion.

Except for vast military operations of a few of the kings of Delhi the others had to rest content with a precariously held kingdom of Delhi. And even those few could only batter the resistance offered; they could not consolidate an imperial structure. And even in the kingdom of Delhi foreign blood freely mixed with the indigenous, and conversion provided easy approach to power. The sons of foreign chiefs were merged in an Indian oligarchy, and the Hindus were able to buy or secure by valuable services complete immunity from interference in their social and religious life.

In Delhi the two currents met, made contacts

if they did not fuse, and produced a new language, a new culture and a broad outlook which soon influenced both the Hindu and the Muslim. The upper layer of economic life was rudely disturbed. But the aristocracy spent all they secured in the country, leaving it in no way impoverished, and the kingdom of Delhi from the date of its foundation was never ruled by foreigners in foreign interests.

India had strength enough to resist, though not to crush, the new force. The Indian fighting classes were too traditional in their methods of warfare. They were, more often than not, divided by loyalties to royal houses which had been rivals too long to organise a sustained military resistance on a large scale. The very strength of their social organisation deprived them of a large field of recruitment. They could not raise a mercenary army by rich promises, as the other side could.

Outside Delhi, things were entirely different. Whenever a kingdom was annexed, the Muslim governor, whether a convert or otherwise, and his friends displaced the old Hindu ruler and his court. In some cases the higher Hindu officials by nominally accepting Islam maintained their position. Only the great seats of learning foster-

ed by royal generosity were broken up; and people migrated from the countries of conflict to places of greater security.

The machinery of administration, however, continued the same as before. The new ruler had to make his peace with the local feudal hierarchy which continued to function as before. The Muslim military governors had anything but a happy time. They fought Delhi; they fought each other; they fought their Hindu neighbours. They stabbed or were stabbed by the Muslim nobles of their own court. They were generally in chronic need of money to finance their wars or luxuries. In their hectic existence they were happy to leave things alone.

Below the upper layer the life, both religious and social, though seriously disturbed, remained intact. Even those who migrated carried with them their religious tenets, traditions and social organisation which provided both autonomy and safety.

In our histories, however, we find the medal reversed. The approach is, more often than not, of the foreign invader, not of the Indian resister. History of India under such treatment becomes a tale of its woes, whereas it should have been that of its efforts to counter them, to segregate

and absorb its cause; and to build afresh on new foundations.

The early destructive incursion which began in 1175 practically ended with Muhmud Tughlukh who died in 1351. It was a hundred and seventy-five years of rude awakening for the country. The new conditions created new problems demanding fresh solutions, and that led to the birth of a cultural resistance.

This period saw two changes. First, the rules of the war game which rendered the activities of the warlike and turbulent comparatively innocuous were abandoned. Secondly, at places where the Muslims held court, the restraining hand of the Brahmana was removed.

These changes upset the equilibrium of social and cultural forces. The fences which surrounded violence were broken up. Wars became orgies of brutality, both for combatants as well as non-combatants.

The social organisation in India, as stated before, rested on tradition, laws and rules of conduct accepted as divinely inspired. The sanctions behind them were the conscience of the community, the weight of habit, and social ostracism, which meant loss of position, prestige and economic standing.

The framework of this organisation was shattered at the point where it touched the ruling or fighting classes. The influence of the learned Brahmana at Courts was gone. The nature of the war necessarily precluded the application of old principles and blunted the conscience even of Hindu kings. Conversion to Islam provided not only a safe, but oftentimes a remunerative escape from social sanctions. The fighting and the turbulent classes, except in kingdoms where Hindu kings still followed ways of old, became a law unto themselves.

The only sanction under the circumstances which could bring these classes into a co-ordinated system was military coercion by a powerful State. A Hindu king could not create such a state, for the old organisation was too powerful where they ruled. The Muslim kings could not do so for they were or had to be bigots and so alienated sections of people. The mercenary instruments on which they relied for conquests were also too wild to settle down to constructive work; and the ceaseless personal intrigues which surrounded them made it impossible for them to convert the oligarchy that supported them into an imperial hierarchy.

In the courts of Delhi, Jaunpur and such other

places conversion for convenience, mixed marriages, and increasing reliance on Indians rather than foreign mercenaries had led to the birth of a common language and culture and to an adjustment of the Hindu and the Muslim, even during the time of Allauddin Khilji. The scholars and poets evolved a new outlook. India had become their motherland in fact and in spirit.

Outside such courts a great spirit was stirring the country. The ancient but undying culture of India was fulfilling itself in new ways. Religion which had been stagnating provided a new and fresh impulse. Ramanand, the great reformer, reasserted the eternal values of Indian culture in their pristine purity and strength. Literary men deprived of royal support turned to the people and to the spoken languages which had so far been neglected in favour of Sanskrit. And they began a new movement, a great cultural synthesis, which was to see its climax in the next period.

XIV

An Apostle of Resistance

I WENT to Nankana Saheb, the birthplace of Guru Nanak, a little town about two hours motor run from Lahore. On November 3, the Khalsa had gathered there to celebrate the anniversary day of their great Guru.

The whole town was full of Sikhs,—men, women and children. Shopkeepers, toysellers and sweetmeat vendors carried on a brisk business. The Gurudwara was thronged with the devout.

This Gurudwara had a gruesome tale to tell, a tale to which the Sikhs look back with pride. During the agitation launched by the Akalis for vindicating the community's ownership over the Gurudwara eighteen years ago, the Mahant of this shrine resisted the entry of the Akalis. He claimed the Gurudwara as his. One fine morning over a hundred Akalis entered the sanctum and sat down where the Granth Saheb was being

recited. It was a deliberate act of the most unparalleled heroism. The Mahant's men were ready with their rifles, and emptied their powder and shot into these heroes of non-violent resistance. The walls still bear traces of this insensate butchery. And underneath the monument erected at the place where their corpses were burnt, I saw in the vault the bones and ashes of these immortal Akalis.

For long I was touched by the sight of these sacred relics of undying heroism.

The Sikhs are few; 46 lakhs in this country of 40 crores. But they form the best organised group in the country, with a well-knit life, a simple faith and a heroic tradition.

Out of a religious sect, Guru Govindsingh created a hereditary, military camp. It has not forgotten Guru Nanak. It lives on the glories of Guru Govind Singh. Its proudest achievement has been destruction of the Moghul rule in the North. And as I lived among them, for a day and a half, there was no doubt left in my mind that the Khalsa is destined once again to play a great part in the moulding of the future of this country. For their life is one long training for concentrated and organised resistance.

One of the greatest tragedies of modern India

is the mutual distrust between the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab. Why it should be so was difficult to understand for a stranger like me. I did not find the Sikh different from the Punjabi Hindu except in the externals. The Granth Saheb is Hindu to the core. The Khalsa was the bulwark of Hinduism in the North. Its veneration for the cow is greater than of any set of Hindus. There are intermarriages between Hindus and Sikhs today. Their fortunes are flung together today and will so remain in the future. The fundamental identity of the two would lead to a permanent understanding, if a determined attempt were made.

There is no doubt that there is a separatist tendency among the Sikhs themselves. But closer contact with the leading Sikhs who follow Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader,—whose strength of character and clarity of outlook I came to respect even during the short time we were together—convinced me that this consummation is not difficult to be accomplished if the Hindu leaders of the Punjab treated the Sikhs with the consideration to which their position in the Punjab entitles them.

In my reply to Mr. Jinnah I described the Khalsa as the spearhead of the movement for

Akhand Hindustan. No Sikh has any illusion on the issue of Pakistan. He will fight, and fight bravely against it, if it is sought to be enforced. And out of that struggle, I have no doubt, will emerge a glorious future for him, as it once did in days gone by.

I considered it one of the great moments of my life, when I was invited to offer my humble tribute to Guru Nanak Saheb on his anniversary at Nankana Saheb.

One of the most wonderful phenomena in the history of the human race is the tenacity and resilience with which India and its culture has persisted through ages. Older than Egypt, much older than Greece and Rome, she still lives. Her life is unbroken, her culture undiminished. Her message is as inspiring today as it was centuries ago. This immortality, India owes to the unbroken series of the great Masters whom she has produced age after age. They have given it fresh youth with every generation. They have given her message fresh inspiration with every new situation.

Truly has Gita sung the Lord's message:

Whenever Dharma declines,
And unrighteousness, Oh Bharata, uprises
Do I body myself forth.

And when India was laid low in the fifteenth century, when her culture was in danger, when her men were sold as slaves and her women dishonoured there arose many masters who gave her the strength to bear and the will to resist. Of them, Guru Nanak Saheb was one of the greatest. With burning feelings he described the conditions surrounding him:

No longer do the beauteous maids
Of the fragrant locks and foreheads kumkum-marked
Live in the sheltered chambers of the palaces
Where once they lived.
The sword of Babar has cut their tresses;
On their tonsured heads, dust is thrown;
No rest they find in homeless wanderings,
What a change!
How strange Thy dispensation, Lord!
How inscrutable Thy ways!
Captive, they are led,
With halters round their graceful necks
Where once sparkled the beauty of pearls
Their wealth and charm
Which once brought slaves to their feet.

* * *

For orders have gone round to the armed retinue:
Take them as you will:

Dishonour them as you like:
Send them away in disgrace if you please.

* * *

Babar's armies march over the land:
The captive's lot is hard;
None dare worship or pray.

Again, Guru Saheb says by way of prophecy of the same woes which distressed his heart:

With a mighty host, terror striking,
Does he hasten from Kabul, like unto a bride-groom.
Sin and untruth follow him in procession.
By force he will demand the bride,
The Hindu's treasured wealth, Oh! Lalo.
Woe will disfigure the luckless land;
Modesty, honour and dharma will go;
Shameless vice and evil unquenchable
Will flourish, O Lalo, dear.

Terrible times, when other peoples might have sunk into irretrievable degradation! But not so the Indians; for, they possessed the life-giving trust in God.

Let me sing the songs of blood, Oh Nanak
Let on my forehead be the kumkum-marks of blood, Lalo.
Lord's Will be done, Oh Nanak.
How dare mortal stand against His Will?

It is this unalterable faith in God which has saved India time and again.

Guru Saheb had completely surrendered himself to the Lord. He sings:

Surrender unto the Lord
At His feet do thou lie.
Happy and at peace are those
Who link their souls
To His feet.

Surrender unto God was the life's inspiration of Nanak, as it has been of all true prophets since the beginning of time.

Let thy mind be filled with Me,
Give thy love to Me, even your offerings and your homage,
Then wilt thou come to Me.
That's My troth I pledge thee here,
For thou art dear to Me—

This is not a poetic fancy, but an eternal truth which saves the man who sees it. He who realises it is the Master.

Guru Nanak Saheb was such a Master. Friendly to all, compassionate, he had no self. Egotism held him in no bondage. Unattached to pleasure or pain, contented and self-controlled, he surrendered himself to the will of God, and went his way with irresistible resolve. This is what

made the Guru Saheb the great alchemist. He transmuted weakness into strength, cowardice into courage, the vanquished of to-day into the victors of tomorrow.

He reached the noblest heights of resistance. Every moment he pursued the path of duty. He backed every act of his with his life.

Dost thou desire to play Love's arduous game?
Cut off thy head, first;
Put it on the palm of your hand;
And with heart indomitable and at peace
Follow me on the path I tread.
Waver not, tremble not,
But prepare, Oh! dear,
To lose thy head with joy serene.

This is the message which Guru Nanak Saheb delivered to this country in her worst days. Resist evil; back your effort with your life. It was this message of unwavering resistance which created a new spirit in this land. It inspired the venerable Guru Teg Bahadur cheerfully to offer the supreme non-violent satyagraha by surrendering his life to the intolerance of Aurangzebe. It enabled Guru Gobind Singh to create the Khalsa, the sword arm of old India. It produced the will and the energy to destroy the Moghul empire in the north.

Let me try to understand this message, this taking one's head in one's hand before pursuing one's God-given task.

Take our modern life. If the West offers us attractive things, we cannot resist; we become denationalised apes of European habits and outlook. If alien rulers offer us hopes, we cannot resist; we must delude ourselves. If our enemies threaten us, we begin to tremble and count the cost of a failure. Four hundred millions of human beings, like sheep in a pen, live, lured by promises, frightened by the future.

Gandhiji taught us Satyagraha. Back your Truth with your life, says he. It is the old, old message of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Better one's thankless dharma
Than alien task, tho' well performed
Better to die
Doing one's task;
Another's task is fraught with danger.

It is the self-same message for which Guru Nanak Saheb lived, and which Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Govind Singh vindicated.

But how have we understood the message? We do not find our own Truth, much less do we back it with our life. We may do some act out of a herd feeling. We may do it to win applause, to

retain our seat in power. We may do it in order not to lose caste. That is not 'placing the head on the palm of one's hand.'

The message of Guru Nanak Saheb—this message of eternal life—can be heard by all who choose to hear. We are in strange times, as bad as, if not worse than, the time of which the Guru Saheb sang. We are an unarmed and helpless people, the plaything of a foreign master. Our frontiers may any day be attacked. Our country's integrity is threatened by the Disruptionist.

Unwavering resistance to all things evil is our only hope. Resistance will have to be at many fronts, but of them all the most important is that of the integrity of the country. If by a supreme effort of resistance, we keep India one and indivisible in the midst of this international crisis, and despite the movement which threatens internal disruption, she will emerge, great and free, the mistress of her destiny. We would have then lived the message, for we would have learnt 'to carry our head in our hand.'

XV

Bhaini Saheb Of The Golden Age

A VEDIC ashram; a long stretch of green fields with a cluster of old, beautiful trees in the middle; ample-uddered, sturdy cows browsing under the trees; mud-huts tenanted by tall men with long, flowing beards and hardy, fine-looking women; a simple hardy race clad in khaddar, laughing, full of courtesy and welcome. In the centre of the clump of trees, a large *katcha*-built hall of prayer covered by a thatched roof from which prayerful music rises from early dawn wafting the graceful cadence of *mantric* chants. Long white-bearded priests sitting round sacrificial fire offering ghee. The sacrificial fire rising in spirals to the sky, like the soul of men in search of the Divine. This was the Ashram of the Vedic Agastya as I drew it from my imagination in my novel *Lopamudra*. And such was the Ashram I saw with my own eyes on the evening of November 1, 1941, six-

teen miles away from Ludhiana. The place is called Bhaini Saheb, where lives Sadguru Maharaj Pratap Singhji of the Namdhari Sikhs.

It is a moonlit night when I reach there. The illusion is complete. I cannot believe that the sequestered spot whereupon has descended the repose and beauty of a Vedic night can be found in a village in the twentieth century Punjab.

The Guru, a wonderful personality, clad in clean white khaddar with a rosary of wood might have stepped out of *Rg Veda Samhita.* Tall and grave of mien is this man, with a smile that makes you happy, and a humility born of a lifelong desire to serve his community. He holds undisputed sway over seven lakhs of Namdharis; for, to them his word is the word of God. In that community no one resorts to a Court of Law; the Guru's word is the final arbitrament.

The Guru is the very image of refinement. His courtesy is not of the modern, artificial variety, but something genuine, emanating from an innate nobleness of mind and good breeding which the heritage of a long line of cultured forefathers alone gives. Before his manners the best of modern manners looks insufficient, nude. Culture sits easy on him. He knows music and poetry, all about horses and cows, and quite a

lot, too, about modern affairs, national and international.

He received us in the only brick hut which had glass doors, a special convenience erected by the Guru, possibly for the convenience of moderns like myself. He introduced his two sons, fine young men who would some day hold the sceptre of the Namdharis. I met one of the principal disciples, a very tall, broad-shouldered young man with a dark beard who towered over everyone like a giant. He talked to me in fluent English about God and the Guru and of the dynamic effects of *Gurumantra*. He was a millionaire contractor from Rawalpindi who had placed himself at the disposal of the Guru. He and his wife, both devout disciples, had made it their life's business to spend their leisure in going to friends to sing *Kirtans*.

We were taken to dinner by the Guru. He offered an apology that his mother was not there to serve us as she was unwell. His two sons were among those who served us.

The Guru maintains a perpetual Sadavrat, *langar* as it is called. Everyone who comes there is fed, no matter who he is; for that was, said the Guru, the wish of *his* Guru.

I gathered a little about the Namdhari Sikhs,

six to seven lakhs strong. They believe that the succession of Gurus did not end with Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, as was believed by the majority of Sikhs, but continued after him. According to them, Sadguru Pratap Singh is the fourteenth Guru.

The Namdharis do not eat meat or wear the kirpan. They spin and weave their own cloth, never go to a Court of Law. For years and years in the past the community had a scheme of non-co-operation all its own. They had their own postal system. They had their own way of living. They refused for years to have anything to do with the institutions set up by the British.

I heard the story of the thirteenth Guru and was shown the spots hallowed by the memories of that noble martyr. About 1872 the thirteenth Guru, Ram Singhji Maharaj, was suspected by the British Government of what in modern phraseology may be termed subversive projects. A religious head of a stern, heroic community, who did not bend his knee to the foreign master, was naturally a suspect. Policemen raided Bhaini Saheb and arrested Guru Ram Singhji. They took him away to Mandalay in Burma where he was kept for the rest of his life.

I saw the place, under the old Guru's throne,

which the authorities had dug up time and again to see that no arms were hidden there. I saw the dark kitchen under whose vaults the Namdharis concealed themselves to sing the *Guru Granth Saheb* when Guru Ram Singhji was taken away and the house was searched.

The belief is held by some that the thirteenth Guru still lives. Anyway, he still lives in the hearts of the Namdharis. It is said of Guru Ram Singhji that when he was arrested his followers wanted to resist by the sword. The Guru intervened. 'Those who use the sword will perish by it', he said.

A story was told to me of the heroic spirit of the Namdharis. Gowraksha, protection of the cow, has been the cardinal doctrine of the Sikhs. Once a few Namdharis pursued a man who had butchered a cow, and killed him. The Namdharis at the time had a bad name and the crusaders were ordered to be blown off at the cannon's mouth. One of them was a little boy. The officer-in-charge wanted to let off the boy. The boy insisted that he must share the lot of his companions. The officer told him that he was too small to come up to the cannon's mouth. The boy's resolve was unshaken. He brought a few stones and piled them one upon the other and

stood upon it to bring himself up to the cannon's mouth. He wanted to be blown up, and so he was.

I also paid my respects to the venerable old lady, who after the catastrophe which overtook them in 1872 was made to walk barefoot for three months surrounded by armed Police. She had seen the glory of her house gone. She had brought up her infant son and trained him to the high office which was to be his. She had suffered starvation and humiliation. For years she had seen the punitive police at her doors. In helplessness her heroic spirit had risen in revolt against the treatment given to her house and people.

But years and years had since then rolled by. The Government had relaxed; the punitive police was no longer there. She now sees the *Granth Saheb* being recited day after day openly, fearlessly. She serves every day the people who flock to the Namdhari Durbar for worship. She beholds her son grow up to his hereditary position, attracting men by his manner and the saintliness of his life, upholding his office with rare dignity. Happy mother!

And when she looked at me with eyes dimmed by age and expressed her regrets that she

was not well enough to serve food to me the previous evening, I saw in that little, shrunken figure before me the magnificent woman who had fought a hard battle and won it.

Guru Pratap Singhji told me in his simple way: "Whatever I am today, I owe it all to her."

For the night I was housed in that little brick hut with glass doors. The beautiful *Sharat* moon lit up the fields. A faint breeze rustled among the tree tops. I came out in the solitude of the night. The beauty of the radiant night descended on me and I felt that here, away from the sordid struggles of a mechanised world, was the peace which Rshis had coveted and won.

So long as such spots remained in this land, India will be a thing of beauty. I wish I could stay there for some days. But that was not to be........

The next day the Guru started his prayers early at four in the morning, the time sacred to the Rshis of old. I got up a little later and joined the prayers. In the big prayer hall made of uncemented bricks, devotional songs were being sung. Verses from the *Guru Granth Saheb* were also chanted. In the half-lit hall men and women, khaddar clad, sat with a spirit uplifted by the noble music and the still nobler devotion which it embodied.

The prayers were over. The two sons of the Guru then treated us to a more stirring music ....

Time was flying fast. I bade goodbye to the Guru and came away with a heavy heart.

Why do men desert such spots where they are in tune with Nature and its Master, to seek the struggles of a morally bankrupt world?

XVI

Indian Culture

FOR many years and repeatedly I have tried to discover the true meaning of Indian Culture. The ancients called this culture 'Dharma', which meant to them the sum total of all sentiments, beliefs, values, ideals and activities which made life worth living and literature and country worth loving. To-day, I am trying to piece my thoughts about it together, so that the soul of Bharatiya Vidya, as I understand it, may be laid bare.

The words 'Arya' and 'Aryan' have been used in different senses by different men at different times. Hitler's use of them has for the first time in history engrafted on the words implications, which, if true, would make us hang down our heads in shame. Coming nearer home, the word 'Aryan' as applied to Indians as a race may appear to involve the question of heredity; but as applied to culture it has nothing to do with race purity

or Brahmanical exclusiveness. Who can say how much of Dravidian blood runs in the veins of the Brahmins of India? Many men of non-Aryan descent have risen to Rshihood. And in later times did not Kabir popularise it? And did not Rupa Goswami, Sanatana Goswami and their nephew Jiva Goswami, the principal disciples of Chaitanya, converts from Islam, found the Vrinvana school of Bhagavat Dharma, pure and undefiled? Let us shed prudery and face facts. Arya Dharma was created, upheld and propagated, among others, by men who, but for their cultural distinctiveness, could not have been called Aryans of unmixed descent. Aryan culture, thus, is Indian culture; the culture which has been built up in India on the thoughts, ideals and efforts of men and women who have consciously or unconsciously identified themselves with it.

But the word 'culture' is difficult to define and is very often confused with institutions which are only the dead material through which it works. Sir Henry Maine in trying to study social evolution in the Western world based his conclusions on the social conditions of Indians and certain primitive races. He and many authors after him confounded social conditions and institutions like the tribe, the patriarchate and the joint family as

characteristic productions of Aryan culture. According to Maine, Hindus, by reason of their *Smritis*, were condemned to 'a feeble and perverted civilisation', while the Romans, having a code, 'were exempt from the very chance of so unhappy a destiny.' The generalisation is both ridiculous and unwarranted. The Romans and their culture which supported similar social institutions have disappeared from the face of the earth; the Hindus and their culture survive with a vitality which many younger nations might envy. European scholars and after them their Indian pupils have entirely misread Hindu Law and the culture it enshrines. In reality the social institutions which it deals with are common to human society in certain stages of its growth in all parts of the world; they are not the result of Aryan conception of life. But they withered away elsewhere; in India they survived only because of the values which Arya Dharma gave to them. These values, therefore, constitute the culture and deserve to be noted.

The distinction between civilization and social conditions or institutions on the one hand and culture on the other has to be noted if the true meaning of culture has to be found. Culture is not civilisation.

Aryan culture is not the apparatus of life, not the stones by which the mother of the Vedic Rshi ground corn, not the canoe by which Rama and Sita crossed the Sarayu, not the 'charkha' in which many see the embodiment of its spirit. The civilisation of India, that is, its technological and institutional equipment, has varied, or, been borrowed from others from age to age. The bridges which span our rivers, the mills which weave our cloth and the legislatures which resound with our political hopes and disappointments are not ours by invention but by adoption. They are the permanent processions of mankind which influence culture, no doubt, but do not constitute it. Similarly our social habits, the caste, the family, the marriage system are but crusts of life, not life itself. Even the social and religious beliefs by which culture was propagated and preserved in Gujarata in the past do not in themselves constitute it. These change with time, with the civilisation of each age.

This culture, however, is to be found in the sense of continuity; in the consciousness of Indian unity in the permanent values in which the Indians have always seen the fulfilment of life; in the ethical and idealistic absolutes which have moulded the Indian outlook on the eternal questions: What is life? What is its purpose and end?

Thought, equally, is not culture, nor is knowledge by itself. Culture consists of certain values which are found to express themselves through rituals and myths; through modes of life and canons of conduct; through social traditions and institutions;

through modes of expression in language and literature; through theories and ideals of life; through all the social, emotional and ideal factors which make a society a distinctive living organism. These values are created by the dominant Ideas, persisting for ages in a society, which are not means to an end, but in themselves form the end and aim of life.

XVII

The Joint Family

IN order to pursue the inquiry it becomes necessary to discover what are the essentials of Indian culture, that is, features which are the *sine qua non* of Indian culture as we understand it. The obviously essential features are (a) the joint family, (b) the conjugal life, (*c*) varnasramadharma, (*d*) the conception of Aryavarta, (*e*) the supremacy of Samskrita and (*f*) historic continuity as implied in the sacredness attributed to Vedas.

The first essential feature is family life dominated by strong patriarchal traditions and, as its corollary, imposing strict regard for feminine virtue which would preserve in name the purity of the race, but in substance the purity of culture. The collectivism of the family or clan or group as a feature of social life is common to all peoples at some time or the other and is found not only in India and China, but in almost the

whole of Asia and parts of Africa. The bond of the mother is biological; that of the father psychological, created and maintained by a subconscious effort of the imagination. But the patriarchal bond has been creative and has proved by far the stronger of the two; it has given to the world the family, an irresistible clan-feeling and the idea of brotherhood of man. It has also provided protection and relief to women, children and the destitute in the struggle of life.

To this normal institution created by social evolution, Aryan culture has contributed special significance. It lays down,

(*a*) that the father's supremacy has to be maintained not only by respect but by emotional worship of all male forefathers traced right up to a Vedic or Puranic semi-divine person, and by an identity of interest between three consecutive generations of male descendants; and

(*b*) that the mother's (i.e. the wife's) identity with the father (i.e. the husband) has to be absolute and inalienable.

In many ancient countries, Rome and Greece for instance, the first idea was accepted. But in India both these ideas have been worked into rituals, ceremonies, beliefs and laws. Through

them every person consciously and deliberately *wills* himself into a living unity with his male ancestors and descendants; as soon as a male child is born he steps into the charmed circle of the *kula* and *gotra*. And every woman similarly wills herself into a living unity with her husband. She is enjoined not merely to be the mother of heroes, a queen in the father-in-law's house, but as *Parasharagrhya Sutra* says, is expected that her breath should be bound up with her husband's breath, her bones with his, her flesh with his:

प्राणैस्ते प्राणान् सन्दधामि अस्थिभिरस्थीनि मांसैर्मांसानि त्वचा त्वचमिति.

Both these processes of identification are efforts of creative imagination, not of physical reality. The Aryan culture has thus invested ordinary patriarchal family and conjugal life with a deliberate effort of the individual will to become something other than what it is in fact. A man is an individual; by force of his will he becomes the member of a family coming down from a bygone ancestor. A woman is an individual; by creative imagination she becomes her husband's 'half body'. Scope, no doubt, is left for the wayward to will otherwise and drift away. The father can disrupt the family; the son can break it up; the brothers can separate. The wife,

however, may break her unity only if the husband is dead or becomes an ascetic, impotent or fallen. The break up of families, the promiscuity of marriages, cheap divorces, the economic helplessness of women and the resultant vulgarity, the dire vagaries of the centrifugal female were dangers which the Aryans were by no means prepared to ignore. But those who have known the women of this country know how by unconscious influence and conscious willing they have acquired complete identification with their husbands, and can testify what part their volition plays in the process. Sitas and Savitris are not myths or interesting figures of the past: they are living ideals which millions of women think of by day and dream of by night till they in their little spheres will their way to a complete merger with their husbands. Thus it is the individual effort made by individuals in each generation through the influence of Aryan cultural ideals, that domestic life in India has survived the shocks of time.

XVIII

Varnasrama

THE next essential feature is a conception of Society as made up of an inalienable interdependence of classes of men divided according to their functions, that is, (*a*) the creative, the intellectual, and the idealistic classes, (*b*) the organisational and the protective classes, (*c*) the classes producing and distributing wealth, (*d*) the classes which render essential services to society. This organisation of society was conceived irrespective of territorial limits. Every man was held to have been born with *svadharma*, a word connoting both aptitude and function. It insists upon a respect—inherent both in human nature and needs—for the Brahmanas, i.e. the members of the first class, who stand for learning, culture and self-control.

Culture and intellect wedded to high idealism which loves to conquer by service must dominate

society if human life is not to sink to the level of beast's. And so has it been proved even in the so-called class-less Russia, where the intellectuals have, under a professedly proletarian regime, acquired a position of leadership and privilege.

This interdependence has permitted a new comer to benefit by, but not to destroy, social privileges, and has offered scope to the uncultured to rise in the scale of life but never so fast as to jeopardise its stability. It postulates the possibility of harmonious co-ordination of these classes as the fundamental basis of stable social existence. Classes more or less similar to these are found in many ancient and modern societies, and have often tended to hereditary exclusiveness. But this social structure has been metamorphosed by the Aryan spirit into Varnasrama-dharma, a peculiarly Aryan idea.

The history of Varnasrama is often ignored when considering this question. In the Rg-Vedic times the white Aryans and the noseless and dusky Dasyus were ranged against one another as races representing distinct cultures. The Rishis were the priest-singers, the pure, the inspired, not yet ranged into a caste; and the Aryans lived in *visas*, the villages, and formed the bulk of the people. In the days of the

Aitareya and the *Satapatha Brahmana*—chronologically the next records extant—the Dasyus had been conquered and absorbed in the Aryan society, the unabsorbables at the time being segregated into Sudras. Even the Dasyu god Sisnadeva had been transmuted into the god Isana, the forerunner of the Mahadeva. The political supremacy of the white Aryans was transformed into the cultural supremacy of the class who, by their rigid self-discipline, kept alive the torch of Aryan rites and beliefs, the emphasis on race purity being transferred to cultural purity.

Professions and classes invested with privileges have tended to become hereditary, particularly in primitive days. The Aryan conception of Brahminhood on the contrary assumed the possibility of any one, however low or alien, rising to its very height. Vasistha, one of the earliest of Vedic Rishis, was of doubtful Aryan lineage; his grandson Parasara was the son of a Sudra; and his great-grandson, the first among those who taught the Arya Dharma, and who is recognised as an incarnation of Vishnu, Dvaipayana Vyasa, was born of a fisherwoman. Kavasha Ailusha, Vatsa, Satyakama Jabala, Mahidasa, Aitareya, all well-known Rshis, had Sudra blood in their veins.

And no class was doomed to perpetual inferiority. As one rose in the scale of culture, as his habits, attainments and ideals became attuned to the permanent values of Aryan culture, his position among the varnas altered for the better. The Vratyastoma, a ceremony laid down in the *Pancavimsa Brahmana,* prescribes how the fallen and the non-Aryans can be turned into Aryans.

Aryan culture has little respect for birth. He who has realised pure Joy does not see any difference between a Candala and a non-Candala, says the *Brhadaranyaka.* Later the foreign armies which came to conquer, but lived to settle in the country, became Kshatriyas. The Osvalas and Porvadas of Gujarata were classed as Kshatriyas till they forsook the art of war for commerce, when they became Vaisyas. The Sudras, rising in the scale of life and culture, soon came to be recognised as Vaisyas. And reformers came and swept all artificial barriers away and permitted classes to be readjusted according to *guna* and *karma.* Everyone is and must, by the nature of things, be born in his father's position in life; but the Aryan culture gave him the right to rise to Brahminhood. It gave for all a secure place in the class of their birth, but demanded for

every one the right to assume the place his capacity and culture deserved. One could always will his way to Brahminhood like Satyakama Jabala, to a Kshatriya's position like Parasurama.

But Varnasrama was more than this. The four castes were inter-dependent components of one harmonious whole. Society was conceived as an association of four castes for the maintenance of social order as inspired and controlled by Dharma. The earliest record of this view, after race superiority of the Aryans was transformed into the cultural hierarchy of the Varnas, is contained in the well-known *Purusha Sukta.* The Brahmana sprang from His mouth, the king from His arms; the Vaisya was born from His thighs and the Sudra from His feet. These four classes were thus the inseverable limbs of the Purusha, the cosmic unity conceived as an individual which transcended the universe by a cubit.

Here we have the idea of social order first presented as a unity, a wonderfully fresh conception which coloured all later Indian thought. Society, according to this view, is not a restriction of natural rights, as Rousseau conceived it; and self-interest is not the sole and sufficient urge for social action. 'We cannot be ourselves without the others' was a truth on which the structure

has been based ; and the summed up energy of their co-operation gave it its enduring quality. To the conflicting claims of social life, the Aryan thought thus gave a new value. This unity was to be achieved by prayer and penance, by service and love; by every individual willing such a unity into existence. This was the basic value of Aryan culture handed down from the author of *Purusha Sukta*, through myriads of saints, sadhus and bhaktas, to Mahatma Gandhi.

XIX

Aryavarta

THE next essential of Indian culture was an unwavering faith in Aryavarta, the holy land of the Aryans, leavened by an abiding veneration for those who lived and died so that Aryavarta may live one, indivisible and eternal. Aryavarta in fact is not a tangible quantity. In some remote age it was a geographical expression now surviving only under the name of Aryano Vaejo of the *Zend Avesta.* At one time it was vaguely defined as the territory south of the Himalayas, north of Pariyatra, east of Adarsha and west of Kalakavana. But in Kautilya's days Takshashila, his birth place in the N.W.F. was perhaps its principal centre. Yajnavalkya made his code for Aryavarta, that is, the land north of the Narmada. Once Gujarata and the western provinces were outside it. In the days of Memacandra, Patana, its capital was claimed by pandits to be as much a centre of Aryavarta as

Ayodhya. No one will now venture to put Rameswaram outside its frontiers. Aryavarta has thus no fixed limits ; it is a land, never outside India, where Arya Dharma ruled.

It was at no stage a land of the past. Mythology embracing legends of sacred rivers, mountains and cities, royal houses and semi-divine heroes and sages, has made it a living presence to every generation. A keen sense of historic continuity has been preserved through a belief in the Vedas as the ultimate source of all inspiration, giving to all races of every origin and period a conscious unity of life and history. Every child brought up in an atmosphere permeated by Aryan cultural influences dreams of Vasistha and Visvamitra, of Parasurama and Rama, of Krishna and Arjuna, and wins for himself a new Aryavarta, which becomes for him his native land in and for which he lives, moves and has his being. And men for centuries have proudly felt what the author of the *Vishnupurana* so beautifully described:

What he says was not merely true of the past, but has been an ever-present reality produced by the creative imagination of every cultured Indian.

This value is achieved by associating Aryavarta with Samskrta which, according to Aryan

values, is not merely a language perfect in structure and classic in expression, with a rich, varied and beautiful literary achievement. It is the living embodiment of the cultural ideals of the race, an Aryavarta in verse and prose of undying beauty woven into the mind and life of every cultured home. Objectively, Aryavarta was the memory of an old home ; mythology, a bundle of traditions ; Samskrta, a dead language of literature and religion. But to these three elements was given a new value by fusing them into a composite and glorious conception of an Aryavarta, the land of the spirit, of past glory, present inspiration and future greatness ; not an objective reality, but a psychological entity willed into existence by each cultured generation of Indians, knitting them all in an indestructible bond irrespective of time and place. This fact would explain how in almost two generations Indians have absorbed the Nation Idea ; all they had to do was to impose a political aspect on it.

XX

Becoming

IN all these essentials, the vital ingredient which Aryan culture contributed was not that the individual should accept the family, the class, the country or the language he is born into, but that he should by deliberate, purposive efforts of the imagination create his *kula*, his *varna* and his Aryavarta for himself. Under all the varying beliefs and myths, theories and religions associated with Arya Dharma is found the fundamental truth that the supreme law of life is not being what one *is*, but *becoming*; *becoming* not by pressure of environments, but by self-directed efforts of the imagination.

This truth was perceived by the Vedic Aryans long before the rest of mankind came out of its herd state of unconscious social instincts. The philosophic aspects of the individual have varied with the ages and are immaterial. The Rg-Vedic age did not clearly perceive it as existing apart

from its physical apparatus. The *Purusha* of *Patanjali* is all-knowing and absolute, shrouded in the three *gunas* but distinct from Isvara; the *atman* of Vedanta may, in its pure state, be indistinguishable from *Brahman*; the *atman* of Buddhistic doctrines is understood to dissolve when *nirvana* is reached. But theory apart, the basis of all approach is the existence of the individual, without which the Will to Become has no substance and no point. Each individual has his own aptitudes and functions which for him are greater than those of the greatest, his truth, his *satya*. Death is to be preferable to its surrender. It is the cause and the laws of his being.

In its growth alone, lies the germ of his Becoming. If the individuality is the starting point of an individual's Becoming he needs must have an imaginary absolute of himself, the Dhyeya, the picture of what he will become when the process is accomplished. The imaginary absolute of every man would differ according to his taste, temperament and training.

This law of Becoming postulates the individual, as the fundamental pivot of Aryan culture. He is something more real than society, State or any other social institution. His imagination and will are the generating forces from which they

are born; their life, energy or intelligence is ultimately derived from him.

This law of Becoming is the central idea of Aryan culture. The individual must consciously, deliberately will to bring his imaginary absolute into existence; he must will to *become* it. This will must be made irresistible before he becomes what he wants to be. He, whose will wavers, fails. This will is split into atoms where it is distracted by pleasure and pomp, by ignorance or self-importance, by attachment, repulsion or love of life. He who fights and controls the distractions, who keeps the objective of his imaginative effort, *dhyeya*, before him, strengthens his will to become. Then all the impulses of the individual are harmonised and in his *dhyeya* is reflected in its purest form, the unity of his inter-connected ideals.

The mind, speech and body then harmonise to realise the objective; the will becomes one-pointed. When the mind glows with the light of the *purusha*, the imaginary absolute of the individual; when it holds the objective, unconscious of everything else, then the individual merges itself into its objective. His mind, then glowing with the concentrated vigour of his whole individuality, *becomes* the dhyeya.

What was an imaginary absolute has become himself. Realisation is complete; the individual has become the *purusha.*

In this way individuals, concentrating on the glorious phenomenon that is Aryan culture, have been winning during their life time afresh for themselves and their generation the absolute values which constitute it. The stages of social evolution like the patriarchal family, the classes of men and their relations, the memory of a lost land and the wealth of a dead language—which in other countries became fossilised and passed into history—live again as the healthy essential of a living culture by a process pursued by millions of men for centuries.

Becoming is thus not a sentiment, but deed; hence the emphasis on Karmayoga. Religion inspired by its urge does not rest on belief and scripture, as in Semitic religions, but is a matter of individual experience. The Semitic cultures and the Aryan culture have this ineradicable distinction. Under the former, the individual is an individual and will remain so; by his efforts, he may rise to the heights of saintliness or prophethood; but he will remain for ever, in life as after death, different from the Absolute, from God, who alone will judge him.

The Aryan culture has exactly a contrary outlook. It teaches, nay insists on, endeavour, self-discipline and asceticism in order to realise the Supreme Self in this life. He who fights the distractions, keeping an ever-expanding imaginary absolute, will forge his Will into a *vajra*; the distractions will then fall away from him; he will transcend the three *gunas*,—aspects, in which life is trapped, as it were; and he will shed attachment, fear and anger. Then the concentrated powers of his mind will create what it is bent on. He would reach *kaivalya* and while in flesh become the Absolute. This is the Aryan way as distinguished from the non-Aryan.

But this view of creative power is not left to dogma or philosophy; it is first and foremost an experiential method. Before Becoming, by self-directed will, can yield such results it must be based on some law of cause and effect. This is not mysticism or spiritualism. Psychology has yet to advance far before it can reproduce the experience of the Aryan seers in modern phrase, and logic can never convince a person, who is not prepared to go through the experience or to take the word of one who has gone through it. The law of Becoming is based on the fact that Idea is Creation. When the will of a man con-

flicts with his imagination, the imagination wins. What the imagination loves to become or accomplish is easily done, for when concentrated it alone can bring forth the strength and creative energy in man. A man can only create what he vividly visualises by his imagination. When his imagination and will coincide; when the will is trained to surrender its power to an inflamed imagination; when such imagination constantly and one-pointedly dwells on an object, the visualisation becomes so vivid and one-pointed that realisation follows in fact. Thus, visualisation of the idea of a created thing is a prerequisite to its creation in fact; or rather, as the *Yogasutra* would say, when a thing is visualised in a *samadhi*, it becomes an objective reality.

XXI

Law Of Moral Causation

BUT Aryan culture, while teaching the law of Becoming for exploitation for social or personal ends has also taught another law, which forms both its strength and its limitation. It may be called the Law of Moral Causation.

The *mahavratas*, which are the broad heads under which the law is generally treated, are non-violence, truth, non-stealing, non-waste, and non-possession. They are universal, to be pursued without any consideration of the class of persons concerned and the time, place or utility of their application. They are universal, not because they are categorical imperatives, not because they lead to benefit in this world or the next. They are to be pursued because of a sequence of cause and effect which experience has shown to be unalterable.

If an individual becomes non-violent in thought, word or deed, he will attract love, which

implies influence over man and beast. Many sadhus wandering about in the jungle have attracted the loyalty of tigers and serpents. A wolf-doctor could make the fiercest wolf in the British Zoo come to him like a pet dog. The early Christian martyrs practised non-violence on a mass scale and the love of Europe gravitated to them, giving them unlimited power over the lives of men. Gandhiji has defied and fought all his life, but his antagonists have come to him and forgotten their wrath. When a man has realised non-violence, people forget their hostility to him.

If an individual practises truth, his actions bear immediate fruition. Truth is not correctness of facts or logical accuracy of views; it is thought, word and deed welded in harmony. Anything else is camouflage in some form or the other and cannot lead to successful creative effort. Thus accomplishment is but the perceptible counterpart of the imperceptible individual experience of harmonising thought, speech and action.

And so with non-stealing. Experience has proved the truth that when a man becomes the embodiment of non-stealing, he attracts wealth. When a man realises non-waste in himself, vigour follows; when he gives up all possessions he rea-

lises the how and wherefore of existence, what his place in life is, what his destined goal is.

This is the Law of Moral Causation. Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, non-waste and non-possession are respectively the only inseparable antecedents of love and accomplishments, wealth and vigour and a correct view of life's fulfilment. This is not a theory based on human conventions, or a message from above. It is similar to the law of gravitation; when the apple falls off the tree it is drawn to the earth. You may not be convinced about it, but you will have to follow it all the same. It is a matter of cause and effect established by countless experiences. No Becoming can be perfect or enduring except when it follows this Law of Moral Causation. Violence or camouflage, appropriation or possessiveness may lead to becoming of a sort, but as night follows the day, it will beget distractions, attachment or repulsion and destroy it in the hour of its fruition.

Modern India has not discovered Truth and Non-violence. It has only applied the Law of Moral Causation, so far considered to be applicable only to individuals, to mass life and corporate activities. Truth and Non-violence, on which Gandhiji lays emphasis, are but the instru-

ments of securing desired results and gaining the enduring influence and power which love yields. And as experience of ages has taught us that the Law of Moral Causation is inexorable, Truth and Non-violence can only be principles, never a policy. And in teaching us this Law, Gandhiji has only extended the scope and efficacy of the basic values of Indian culture.

What then is life? What is its purpose and end? Indian culture conceives it as endless Becoming pursued on the path of the Mahavratas, so that life freed from sorrow and struggle may grow into pure Joy—as an experience above and beyond the uncertainties of earthly existence. In the use of materialistic power by an indomitable and all-pervasive effort to will these Ideas into existence lies the secret of India's undying life; in their triumph over such power, the only hope of humanity.

XXII

The Will To Resist

OF books a few only attain the position of classics. Of them, not more than half a dozen have come to be accepted as Scriptures. Of such Scriptures, the pre-eminent is the *Bhagvadgita*—this incomparable converse between God and Man. Edwin Arnold called it *The Song Celestial*; Humboldt characterized it as "the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song in any known tongue". The reasons for its pre-eminence are many.

It is composed by Vyas Dvaipayana, the author of the *Mahabharata*, the poet of poets and the first and foremost prophet of the human race.

This gospel has given more than human power to countless men for the last twenty-five hundred years; to Shankara and Ramanuja; to Vivekananda, Lokamanya Tilak, and Gandhiji among the moderns.

It has also provided the inspiration to immortal works like the *Bhagavata* and Tulsidas's *Ramcarita Manasa* which have shaped and strengthened the eternal edifice of Indian Culture.

Lastly, it has a universality which embraces every aspect of human action, suits every stage of human development.

Yet the modern educated mind in India is a timid mind. It has a subconscious feeling that if it is found relying too often on the *Gita*, the possessor—the arrogant modern—will be classed with the superstitious, the weak, the outworn.

It is a real fear amongst us. But if India is to continue its triumphant march to world influence, the fear must be cast out.

St. Paul in his letter to the Romans said: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ". Why should anyone be ashamed of the Gospel which Vyas taught mankind? No man is ashamed of his learning, of his artistic gifts, or of displaying power, however little it be. Why should he be ashamed of openly confessing the real source of power, the power which strengthens everyone when he is feeble, inspires him when he is weak, upholds him when he is strong?

When all resources fail, then through the words of the *Gita* God speaks:

"Yield not to impotence, Partha.
It befits thee not.
Shake off this wretched faint-heartedness.
Stand up, Oh, harasser of foes."

Then fear flees. Then we recover 'ourselves'; and like unto Arjun, each of us can say, inspired:

"Here I stand firm; my doubts are fled;
I shall act as Thou biddest."

The more desperate the situation, the greater is the power which the *Gita* reveals. This has been the experience of the strong. Why should it not be the inspiration of us, the weak?

The strength which the *Gita* gives does not lie on the surface. It lies in real personal power; not like the power of the worldly, in apparent glitter and domination. It is the power that makes everyone to whom it comes a little more of himself. By and through it, the weak become strong; the shallow, deep; the voluble, silent; the insolent, humble; the wasted, effective. It gives the power of God to everyone that believeth; the power 'to arise and win glory, to overcome foes and to enjoy Kingship'; a power, higher than which, no man can covet or gain.

The power which the *Gita* gives comes not merely to individuals but to communities and

nations, as well, if they could translate its message into action.

The message of the *Gita* can be summed up in the words "Creative Resistance". This has two aspects: Creative Concentration and the Will to Resist. The latter aspect is given in one verse of immortal value:

"Thy every deed dedicated unto Me.
Thy heart in self-hood rested,
All 'my-ness', all hope forsworn.
With thy Self from fever cured,
Resist thou, Oh, Arjuna."

Resist non-self with self, wherever it is, by whatever means; resist it with all the might of body and soul, not as a matter of calculation, but as a matter of offering unto Him: that is the message of the *Gita*.

When in the past foreign hordes overran India, the power of the State and the frenzy of religious fanaticism were allied against her. Her freedom, her faith, her culture, her very existence were in peril. Then the message of the *Gita* gave her power and endurance, and the Will to Resist.

We then resisted in the social sphere and turned guilds into castes, and families into the fortressed strength of joint families. We resisted in the religious sphere and produced *Bhakti*, the

bhakti of Chaitanya, Kabir and Guru Nanak, which swept away the angularities of religious intolerance. We resisted in the intellectual sphere and enshrined Sanskrit as the Goddess of learning, as the mother of everlasting inspiration. We resisted in the political sphere and reduced the power of kings to a mere liberty to quarrel with each other without seriously affecting society and culture.

But Pax Britannica, the hypnotic phrase, made us see things as they were not. It has weakened India's Will to Resist. And a new situation finds us in difficulties.

To-day, a man more ferocious than Attila over-spreads the world, bringing carnage and slavery to country after country, coming nearer to India with every stride. An irresponsible bureaucracy has declined our free association and has armed itself with powers which can stifle the breath of freedom in the country. An ambition to dominate the country or divide it has fired a few, making life and property insecure. Western culture—the teeming womb of tanks and dive-bombers—has insidiously sapped our spirit. It has created dangers we never knew before. We feel help-less; we whine for alien help. We look in vain on all sides for sympathy.

A mood of frustration has seized India as had seized Arjun when Shri Krishna asked him to control his sense of impotence. The message of the *Gita* is the country's only hope. India must dedicate itself to God. It should give up illusory hopes of cheaply earned freedom. It should listen to the voice of God and develop the Will to Resist all evil, in whatever form it faces us.

XXIII

Creative Resistance

THE sands of my freedom are fast running out. Perhaps before the end of this week I may be taken up by the British Government* in furtherance of its war activities. As things are at present, India can only be preserved by obeying Gandhiji's mandate. I must, therefore, surrender my freedom to Britain. I feel no regret, I bear no malice. But I must analyse the springs of my action.

Is my act a purely mechanical one?

It is not. I am doing it of my own free will, for I am convinced that duty points to no other path. The basis of my conviction is not political. Its roots are deep down in the eternal laws of our being.

*Mr. Munshi, on having intimated to the Bombay Police his intention to offer *Satyagraha,* was arrested and taken to Yeravda Jail in the early hours of December 4, 1940.

To resist is the law of life. Many resist what they hate. Many resist what they consider untruth. There is no strength without resistance.

When I resist what I hate, the resistance is instinctive. When I resist things inconsistent with what I think is the truth, my resistance is purposive.

But there is a higher form of resistance, the creative resistance.

A man desires to create something noble, great or beautiful. His fancy has caught its contours, but that is not enough. He must resist all adverse influences, so that the *something* before his mind'e eye becomes a living picture limned with the gorgeous hues of his imagination. The more strenuously he resists the adverse influence the more living will the picture grow, till concentrated imagination will be converted into reality. This is not a philosophical tangle but a matter of experience since the days of Vyas.

All accomplishment is the mental image come true by concentrated resistance to all alien influences.

When a person knows he is not trusted, when he knows he is looked down upon as an inferior creature only fit to be tied to the chariot of his

master he will be less than sub-human if he does not try to resist an attempt to yoke him. If he is a man of self-respect, he will instinctively resist onslaughts on his self-respect. If, suppose, he is made to crawl at the point of the bayonet, his first instinct, will be to resist. Then the instinct of self-preservation will prompt him to submit. He knows that if he did not crawl his head would be broken, and he would sooner keep his head rather than his self-respect. His spirit of resistance will then die. Again and again the spirit of man has to face such onslaughts, and more often than not the spirit prefers surrender to resistance.

But if I offer creative resistance to an order for crawling, I do it as the result of a deliberate decision. This form of resistance has a definite end: to keep me as a self-respecting individual. The motive force is supplied by the objective, viz. my own picture of myself as a self-respecting man which is held by my imagination to the exclusion of everything else. It is supported by the voluntary surrender of things which I cherish. The objective must exist as an accomplished fact in my imagination before I can will it into existence. This is the only conscious process of willing an objective into exist-

ence. It is only the perfect creative resister who can work miracles.

What is true of men is true of nations.

Nations are the products of creative resistance. Britain is not a great nation because of its race or language. It is great because it has been willed into existence by the imaginative efforts of Britishers for several hundred years.

Similarly India as a nation is not organised by unity created by geography, language or religion. It cannot be merely created by objective conditions. It can only be done by Indians consciously *willing* themselves into a nation.

Fouille, in his *La Science Sociale Contemporaine* describes a Nation in the following terms.

"Nation is an organism, which realises itself in conceiving and in willing its own existence. Any collection of men becomes a society in the only true sense of the word, when all the men conceive more or less clearly the type of the organic whole, which they can form by uniting themselves and when they effectively unite themselves under the determining influence of this conception. Society is then an organism which exists because it has been thought and willed. It is an organism born of an idea."

India, the Nation, as I pointed out in *I Follow the Mahatma* is the product of a million wills combined in the act of living up to the idea of a great UNITY. The difference in the concepts between India, a country, and India, a nation, is therefore fundamental. No one can be born an Indian nationalist; everyone has to become one, by thinking, planning and willing himself into a nationalist. Common traditions, sufferings endured and victories won in common, names of great personalities that embody in themselves the character and ideals of the nation; and memories of group conflicts which have yielded proud triumphs, these have made India the Nation.

What is the kind of resistance I am offering by surrendering my freedom to the British?

The present situation can be summarized in a few words.

Britain, up against the might of Europe, is fighting against extinction. In its struggle for self-preservation it would be superhuman if it did not apply every method known to human ingenuity, to obtain or extract help or to remove embarrassment. On the other hand, Indians, barred from participating in the war as partners of Britain, cannot afford to rest content with un-

willing acquiescence in Britain's efforts for prosecuting the war.

We are here faced with a perfectly realistic situation; the master in his life and death struggle seeking to use his dependant as a mere instrument; the dependant determined to remain so no longer, and unwilling to volunteer help unless he was trusted as a comrade.

This is an unfortunate situation, but true, too.

The logic behind this refusal to treat India as a comrade is clear.

The Indian nation is deemed weak and divided. Religious and party jealousies could be played upon to keep it so during this period of danger. Therefore, it must continue to be Britain's chattel by whatever euphemistic name it may be called.

Some men like me, for instance, still think that if Britain falls, it would be a disaster. At one time they even hugged the hope that India would be able to fight the war as a comrade, not as a serf.

But all this is irrelevant.

By encouraging anti-national claims; by emphasising the unnational character of India; by giving a veto to communalists; and by refusing the hand of friendship which the Nation offered, the British statesmen have attempted to neutra-

lise the national demand for a share of power in the centre. Mr. Amery's latest constitutional views about India are evidently intended to serve as disruptive forces in the future.

Britain does not want India the Nation, it only wants India the vassal.

One of two ways are open to an Indian : either to acquiesce in this position, or not.

If he acquiesces, the Nation will wither and die. Only an immense army of soulless automata driven by British officials will then be left.

If he does not acquiesce, he must do something. He has willed the Nation into existence by decades of sacrifice. He can only maintain it unbroken by refusing to live under conditions which imply the negation of India's nationhood. And as he refuses, as the jail door closes upon him and others like him, their common resistance to existing conditions will strengthen the Nation, which will sweep everything before it.

Resistance to be intensely creative has to endure the anguish of the spirit and of the flesh; for out of anguish arises the flaming imagination, the mother of all creation.

Tapas, creative resistance through suffering, is as old as the human spirit. The Rg Veda sage sang a beautiful hymn which described how the

Purusha was sacrificed so that the universe may blossom forth. The early Christian martyrs faced the lion and suffered the cross to make Christianity a perpetual fountain spring of human inspiration. To-day Britain stands as the flower of resistance by self-imposed discipline and suffering, creating a greater Britain than was ever known in history.

Creative resistance is the secret of perpetual youth, everlasting creator of life. Where it is not found, death rages. It is the solace and strength of the oppressed. It renovates the very foundations of things in which we live. Like unto Shiva, the god of gods, it destroys what exists; but from whatever it touches, new life begins to flow.

Creative resistance offered by the human spirit, not with bombers and tanks but through suffering and sacrifice, will destroy the existing order of things which divides one humanity into warring peoples, into the strong and the weak, into the white and the coloured, into the suppressor and the suppressed, into rich and poor, for, "that makes unfortunate creatures of us all."

XXIV

Non-Violence As I Understand It

I COULD not accept the view of non-violence which Gandhiji expected of me as a Congressman. But that does not mean that I have foresworn non-violence or have overnight become anti-Congress. In 1939 in my book *I Follow the Mahatma* I described Gandhiji as a Master to whom God was the Reality, in which he subsisted and by which his being was nourished and impregnated with eternal freshness.

I hold to every word that I said then ; for he illumined and still continues to illumine for me the dark corners of my soul where lurk the spiritual difficulties which I have to face every day.

Never did I feel myself nearer to him than when I wrote my letter of the 26th of May, or when at Sevagram I felt that God who was Truth required that I should not be untrue to him. When my life was spared to me last March, I felt that I could be worthy of him only if I tried

—may be in a very small measure—to live up to the Truth as I saw it and act accordingly in the entirely strange conditions in which the country finds itself.

My parting with Gandhiji is more like the traditional one. The great saint Ramanujacharya, when he found his pupil Ramanand taking a different view of Bhakti, called him, blessed him and asked him to follow it in his own way rather than the way he was taught. Great teachers are the same in every generation. Small minds and great souls never go together.

Gandhiji in his statement has rightly said that I accept the principle of Non-Violence in the abstract. I am intellectually convinced that if an individual became non-violent in thought, word and deed, he could attract love, which would mean lasting power over men; that that was true of an individual as of groups of individuals; that this law of moral causation was unalterable and inevitable. I am equally convinced that *Yogasutra* has enunciated a fundamental law of life when it lays down that *Brahmacharya*, Non-waste in thought, word and deed, leads to great vigour of mind and body; that giving up the sense of possessions leads one to realise the fullness of life.

But to know the inevitability of a law is one thing; to live up to its full implication is another. I cannot take the vow to be a *Brahmachari*, nor can I give up all I possess; nor is it possible for me to be non-violent 'at all times and in all climes'.

Gandhiji himself in 1914 went out to the Kaira District to recruit soldiers for the British Army; in 1941 he has advanced towards a higher state of spiritual strength when he does not countenance the use of violence in domains international, national or domestic. In 1937 Gandhiji wanted the Congress to take power; today, he is averse to the Congress taking power involving the use of violence. He is an instrument of God sent down to achieve the triumph of Non-violence in such measure as is given to a human being. Rising as he does every day in the scale of perfection, he would, the Yogi that he is, vow to be non-violent under all conditions. If occasion arose he would seek self-immolation in a supreme effort to vindicate the living God, which to him is Truth and Non-violence.

But an ordinary man, who has to deal with the affairs of life as he finds them and remain true to himself, has to realise that Non-violence cannot imply the abjuration of the use of force

at all times. Moulana Saheb, Rajaji and Sardar Valabhbhai realised this limitation when at Poona they offered to fight the Germans if a Nationalist Government was conceded to India. The utmost that a man can do is to accept Non-violence only to the extent to which he is able to translate it honestly into practice. He may not inflict violence for its own sake. He may not inflict violence when he is carried away by passion, fear, or anger. But unless he has qualified himself by years of stern discipline and reaches a high state of spiritual evolution, Non-violence for him can only be psychological; an unceasing effort to perform his duty without passion, malice or anger.

I realised the truth of this limitation when I wrote my book above referred to. I emphasized then that it was an incorrect assumption that once non-violent resistance created a nation, no violence would be found in it. Even if India gained Swaraj by that means, I said, there would be many Indians, whose baser passions would have to be restrained by force. This would be equally true of international life, even when non-violence became a potent factor in its regulation. The coercive processes of the States *inter se* could not disappear till there was one political framework for the whole human race.

I cannot imagine that, as between man and man, the right of self-defence by all available means can be given up as long as most men continue to be what they are, just normal human beings.

The problem which confronted me was this: Believing as I did in Non-violence as an inevitable principle of life, was it possible for me, constituted as I am, to translate it fully into action under the difficult conditions imposed by what Gandhiji calls a miniature civil war, or, by the conditions which may arise as a result of the international situation? Or, was I to content myself with psychological Non-violence?

If I see a *goonda* trying to stab an innocent passer-by, or to kidnap a woman, should I not use force to hit the *goonda* on the head? If *goondas* attack my locality, will I not be justified in collecting the young men of the locality to defend our homes, women and children with every weapon at our disposal? If men in this country are cowards, can I not ask them—both Hindus and Muslims—to train themselves in the art of self-defence against hooligans? If, for instance, a house of God—be it a temple or a mosque—is being attacked by incendiaries, should not Hindus and Muslims both combine to repel the attack by

all means available? If, on account of the war, the internal security of the country is in danger,—and I am convinced it is—can we not defend society by force?

These are not theoretical problems today; they are elements of a stark reality which faces us.

Self-examination revealed to me that the content of my Non-violence was restricted in comparison to what Gandhiji expected of me as a Congressman.

As I understand it, *Ahimsa,* when translated into the foreign word 'non-violence' does not convey a correct meaning. *Ahimsa* is not tantamount to abandonment of the use of force. Occasions arise when the use of force is not only permissible, but becomes a paramount duty. Non-violence is a psychological factor. Its moral value is derived from the motive and the impulse. If the use of force becomes necessary in the performance of a duty which is undertaken without fear, malice or anger it is not *himsa.*

Satyagraha is a great weapon of power and influence, a technique which will redound to the enduring credit of Mahatma Gandhi in the history of the human race. Its limitations, however, are found not in its theoretical imperfections, but in the imperfections of human nature. The man

who defends his home, his shrine or his land by force against violence inspired by a lofty sense of duty is as much a *Satyagrahi* as any other.

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I am not an expert on Non-violence. I am but a humble student of it as taught by Vyas, Patanjali and Gandhiji. But if non-violence has a different meaning, *Gita* to me would remain unexplained.

I make every effort to study the sublime principle which Gandhiji teaches. I understand it; I revere it as expressing the Law of Moral Causation more fully. But I cannot act up to it; it is a lie if I said that I can. It is my own frailty that is responsible for this incapacity, not the fault of the teacher or the principle.

'The sun shoots his rays on the clod and the gem alike,' says Poet Bhavabhuti, 'but the gem only reflects light.' I am but a cold.

I have received congratulations and condemnation from many. I beg of them to spare me from both.

I want their prayers.

XXV

To be or to do: That's the Question

RESISTANCE is the essence of individual or corporate growth. If one did not resist, one would become worse than a weed.

Resistance to non-self is the first step towards the growth of a man's personality. Every minute it is growing, it becomes something different from what it has been. This incessant development of one's personality, however, is simply the process of being oneself more and more. This 'Becoming' is the law of life.

I want to be 'myself': that's the supreme desire of every man. It is not a desire to be one's own nude, caveman self. It is the desire to live a fuller life; to live in a more co-ordinated manner; to develop one's capacities with a corresponding enlargement of opportunities. This desire seeks to emphasise, expand and realise all that is in us. It also drives us to admire others who possess

striking personalities, who are 'themselves' in a larger measure.

Unfortunately, most of us try to develop our personality from without, rather than from within. Some dress their hair; others study and modify their voice, manner and appearance; yet others acquire equipment, physical or mental; all with the object of being something, something more notable and effective. But personality is not the result of possessions; it is the outcome of a man being more of a *person* than others, in being a source of inner power.

The greatness of a man is not in what he does, but in what he was and has since become. To 'become', then, is infinitely higher than to 'do'. To be thoroughly 'oneself' is higher service than serving others. "Ye, therefore, shall be perfect even as your Heavenly Father is perfect" said Christ in his Sermon on the Mount. To become 'perfect'—to realize every minute the highest in oneself—is the noblest service to fellowmen.

The Yogi is higher than Ascetic;
He soars above the seers who know.
Higher than those who work, too, is he.
Therefore, Arjun, be thou a Yogi.

The greatness of a truly great man lies in his life, not deeds. Every man who has met Gandhiji

has felt that there is something nobler, greater in the man than in anything that he says or does. Every time I meet him, I find that he is bigger than his biggest deeds.

"It is true," writes Mr. Morley, "that what interests the world in Mr. Gladstone is even more what he was than what he did; his brilliance, charm and power, the endless surprises; his dualism and more than dualism."

Was it not Milton who said that in order to write well the author ought himself to be a true poem; that he should not 'presume to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he had in himself the experience or practice of all that is praiseworthy'?

What did Socrates do, except impress with his tremendous personality every man he came in contact with? Thus does Alcibiades, the magnificent wastrel, testify:

> When I hear him speak, my heart leaps up far more than the hearts of those who celebrate the Corybantic mysteries; my tears are poured out as he talks, a thing I have often seen happen to many others besides myself. I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, and have been pleased with their discourses, but I suffered nothing of this kind; nor was any soul ever on those occasions disturbed and filled with self-reproach, as if it were slavishly laid prostrate. But this Marsyas here had often

affected me in the way I describe, until the life which I lived seemed hardly worth living. * * * I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done: and often and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen I well know that I should suffer far greater pain; so that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man I know not. *All this have I and many others suffered from the pipings of this satyr.*

In the life of every great man we observe the effort with which he struggled against his limitations. We trace the steps by which he rose to become himself; by which he gained freedom which led to fuller expression of his powers.

The men who seek accomplishments without corresponding inner growth do not know the joys of 'Becoming'. They find no real greatness. The *Gita* condemns them unequivocally:

In quenchless longing lost,
By fraud, conceit and lust inspired,
They strive,
Bound by vows impure, with ignorance blind,
Holding on to lies in place of truth,
Engrossed in boundless, anxious designs
Extending to the ends of time.
On sating their desires such men are bent,
Believing, that alone is Truth.
Enmeshed by a hundred bonds of hope

Steeped in lust and wrath
Amassing wealth by lawless means
They strive to get their heart's desires.
"See what I have secured today?" they say
"On this my mind is now set, next.
This wealth is mine; this much more
Shall be mine again.
This enemy have I slain today;
Those others I will slay anon.
I am the lord; I enjoy as I like;
Successful, happy and strong am I.
Who can rival my wealth, my birth?
I alone will offer sacrifice,
Scatter gifts and rejoice
As none before me ever did."
Enveloped in ignorance, these,
Maddened by countless thoughts,
Caught fast in illusion,
Held in thrall by sensual pleasures
Rush headlong into Hell.

Exclusive devotion to the outward in one shape or the other endangers the inner side of a man, which alone gives him strength, beauty and distinction.

"What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" asked the Prophet of Nazareth.

Many gain the world they seek. They also then find to their cost that they have no power to make it their own.

XXVI

Breaking The Bonds

PERSONALITY grows by contact with individuals, by relations and conversation. At the same time, paradoxical though it may look, nothing cramps its growth so much as contact with the world.

Relations with the world impose bonds which few men can break. For a man in daily contact with the world, his time is not his own, his work not of his own choice. His company is not of his selection. His heredity, the needs of social life, his professional and political ambitions, create for him a cage in which his personality must languish and wither.

Getting away from this cage is an imperative need, if one wants to Become, if one wants his personality to grow and expand to its highest possibilities. Its bars are principally made of fear. If they have to be broken, fear must be conquered.

Of all forces which dominate life, fear is the most powerful, the ugliest, the most subtle.

How is Fear to be conquered?

Fear is a habit of mind which causes many activities.

The mind under its influence expects the loss of something which it prizes as an essential. The loss is exaggerated, distorted, made to look devastating and to cause misery long before it actually arises. The mind is also driven to panicky action to prevent the expected loss. The origin of fear, therefore, is in the imagination which portrays the loss of an essential long before it has occurred.

Essentials, the loss of which is feared by the mind, are, generally, approbation of *our* world, possessions like wealth, position or health, and affection or love.

We fear to lose the approbation of *our* world, and so shape our conduct as to deserve it. But love of approbation is in reality lack of confidence in one's own judgment.

Approbation, or its denial, by our set, which we call 'the world', is not based on intrinsically sound judgment; it is merely the reaction of our particular group to our conduct having regard to a standard set up by it. This standard conduct

is different with different groups; it changes also with the same group from time to time.

When we shape our conduct out of fear of disapproval of our group we consider the standard of that group as better than the standard we have set up ourselves; that is, we surrender our judgment to the passing whims of our group.

If, therefore, we lay down our own standard and adhere to it, as being something more real to us, the lure of approval will disappear and with it the fear of its not forthcoming.

The essential, next in order, whose expected loss causes fear may be comprehensively called 'possessions', like wealth, position and health. These are acquired or retained by effective and sustained effort, and that too only when opportunity arises, which, however, is generally beyond one's control.

Fear, by causing misery and urging a man to panicky work, in reality, weakens effective and planned effort and destroys the sense of discovering opportunity.

If systematic and effective work is planned and carried out, to the worker seeking only its perfection, possessions will follow, but—be it noted—only if opportunity arises, not otherwise.

Affection is another person's reaction to our

systematic understanding of *his* needs. Love is the other person's reaction to our self-surrender to him or her. Fear of losing affection or love will distort the understanding or weaken the completeness of self-surrender. It will therefore destroy the foundation of the very thing which it expects to lose.

But if we create a standard of conduct of our own; if we carefully plan an effective effort according to that standard, and no other, waiting for an opportunity; if we try to understand the needs of those whose affection we seek; and if we surrender ourselves more completely to those whose love we cherish, fear will disappear.

Loss of essentials is principally due to lack of effort on our part. Fear, while anticipating disaster, will weaken this effort. If effort is all absorbing, fear will disappear.

If our standard of conduct is set up and adhered to; if others' opinions about our conduct are not allowed to influence the conduct; if we are satisfied with the results that come, only intensifying the efforts to attain our standard, fear will disappear.

That is the path which all men who have conquered fear have trodden.

And the conquest of fear has come only to

those who have surrendered themselves to the Supreme Will.

Indifferent to praise or blame, in silence delighting,
Content with what comes along,
Unattached to home, or unwavering will,
Devoted to Me, such the man
Who alone is dear to Me.

Such men only become free from the stifling bondage which the world imposes. Their personalities are not dwarfed, for their intimacy with God increases as their relations with the world slacken.

Relations with God do not fetter any aspirant's personality. He reveals Himself to everyone according to his prayers or needs. With every step in the growth of his personality, the Kindly Light leads him on to the next.

Whichever the path of his approach to Me,
Therefrom do I welcome him.
The winding tracks of men, but follow the footsteps
Which once I trod.

That is why Patanjali gives to everyone the freedom to choose his own path of Becoming.

'If supreme detachment does not appeal to a man, nor devotion to God, nor again the control of breath, let him,' says he, 'concentrate on sen-

suous objects or on the sorrowless condition of the mind, full of light. If that does not suit him he should concentrate upon the Masters, who have transcended attachment, fear and anger; failing it, upon dreams and sleep; and failing everything let him merge himself in the subject of his choice.'

All roads of yearning therefore lead to Becoming, if followed with zeal and strength. The *Gita* is equally indulgent:

> Your mind and gaze if fixed on Me,
> Thou shalt abide in Me alone.
> Have no doubts whatever.
> But perchance if thou canst not fix
> Thy mind on me with steadfast devotion
> Seek to reach Me, Dhananjaya, by the path of discipline.
> If thou canst not pursue, even this path
> Live for Me alone;
> Doing deeds for My sake only shalt thou reach perfection.
> But even if thou canst not live
> Merging thyself in Me,
> Master thyself: give up all desire—
> The desire for fruits of what you do.

XXVII

Truth Which Is Unity

THE modern mind has confounded knowledge with personality. This confusion has been the 'direful spring of unnumbered woes.' In India it has turned the University graduate into waste paper baskets of odd bits of information, unshaped in character, dwarfed in personality, devoid of faith which alone can convert knowledge into power.

Education in these days is not 'leading forth' of the inmost personality, but imposing fetters of cast-iron alien thoughts on him. We are mechanised by it, regimented; not led forth to the freedom of ceaseless Becoming. Our curiosity is satisfied; we have been given wide attachments and intense dislikes; but the motive power of our personality remains unkindled. We are walking frauds. We have intellect divorced from will, belief in ideals which are belied in life. The reach out to knowledge in some cases develops

to ideals; but in most cases they remain dreams, ineffective and unrelated to life. As a result the Modern does not feel humiliated at his mind being divorced from speech, his speech from action. This two-fold divergence is accepted as inevitable, often as a sign of modernity.

The mind, thought and deed become one dynamic unit in a growing personality. But it is difficult to produce this harmony among forces, all of which generally tend to fly away from each other. When these three forces in a man become one, he serves Truth; then only he becomes effective.

"What is truth?" asked Pilate, and Truth still vexes us with its elusiveness. It is not consistency; growth of vision on a fuller knowledge of facts often makes consistency an untruth. It is not even one's view of things; for, two people trying to see truth may honestly come to two entirely conflicting views. Yet Truth is universal, —sought after, held in reverence by all; the guiding light of all high-souled efforts. This Truth is the inseverable unity of thought, word and deed of a man at a given moment; and in order to be really effective it has to be backed by the very life of the man, who thereby earnestly pursues Becoming.

Patanjali has given the test of what is truthful. 'Truth, when realized, yields the fruits of action'. One has to be truthful—that is, one's thought, word and deed have to be compact, before results will follow. If I want to do things, therefore, the three forces in me have to be welded into a dynamic unity. This is Truth—this supreme unity of the three great forces of life; when it is reached, the personality is tuned to receive the commandment of Him whose instrument one hopes to be.

The path which leads to this 'tuning' is called the way of Brahma. The word 'Brahmacharya' is ordinarily restricted to sexual continence or suppression. This narrow meaning is misleading. Its real meaning is 'Non-Waste'; non-waste of mental, verbal and bodily powers. In that sense alone, the aspirant is asked to be *Yatavakaya-manasa*—controlled in word, body and mind.

We waste our powers, at every moment of our life, in small things and big. We speak inaccurately! it is a waste. We waste our energy in fidgetting, when we ought to be sitting still. We waste time in gossip, in fruitless efforts, in an unmethodical distribution of our time, calling it freedom. How many moderns waste the best part of life, say in golf or bridge, when they

should be achieving the same physical vigour or mental relaxation in a hundred useful ways?

And so with the mind. We splash about our mental energy, like urchins dancing in the sea. A little examination is necessary to convince one of the criminal waste of our mental powers. We feel we are busy when all we are doing is to waste our mental powers in an unregulated, diffused manner. If we want to Become, we dare not waste the energies of our machine wherewith we have to attain results. If a man has to approach God, if he has to be His instrument, he cannot offer to Him something which leaks at every point.

In India, for want of enough men of calibre, a man is drawn to do many things. But it is all wrong, hopelessly wrong; everyone must keep to his business. He should do it for all he is worth. He should not dissipate his energies to things outside his *Swadharma.*

Better one's own thankless dharma
Than alien task, though well-performed.
Better to die
Doing one's own task;
Another's task is fraught with danger.

We forsake our vocation, our *Swadharma,* this unity of purpose, for position, power or wealth

which accident may bring. The result is fraught with danger. It is failure or worse; it stunts the personality. Position, when so occupied, instead of giving scope to one's personality, proves that the personality is not big enough for the position.

Personality therefore presupposes a unity of mind, a power of concentration, a fixed determination, which pursues its object steadily, without wavering or tiring.

The Will of those that strive
Knows but one Aim, Kuru's Delight.
Many-branched and endless is the will of him
Who knows no real effort.

This purposeful concentration of all one's power is what distinguishes the growing personality from the sterile one. Most of us suffer from an incapacity to separate one duty, one ambition, one resolve, from all others which to us is Truth and to give it a pre-eminent place in our life. We dare not become what Krishna asks Arjun to do: "Be thou but an instrument."

This distinguishes a man from a Yogi. A Yogi may be a very ordinary, imperfect man, but he recognises but one Truth as his guide. He would rather do the will of God than any one else's. He consecrates himself to Truth, which is unity of thought, word and deed.

No one can be his true self, unless he consecrates himself thus. Most of us try to feed our personality on activities which have no organic relations with our selves. One is in a profession when he ought to be in office; another is in business, when he ought to be a professor; a third may be in profession, in politics, in literature, when he ought to be consecrated to the salvage of culture, may be through these very activities. How many of us have a definite and divine purpose in life? If so, how many have the readiness to become but an instrument? But life is not long; our capacities are not large. We tread the path of death when we seek to pursue all paths that appear open. Our aims, our friends, our interests are of those of a dilettante. They do not look one way—*ekagra*—as they should, if we were but His instrument.

What is true of a man is also true of a country. A country has its own *Swadharma* predestined by its history, its culture, its inner strength. Any attempt to achieve a result inconsistent with its *Swadharma* unsupported by a unified control of its thought, word and deed will land it in a position of danger.

India has lived so long because it has lived by its truth, its culture, moulded and shaped by

influences of diverse patterns toned to harmony. Her unity in the past was the inter-dependence of its major corporations, the representatives of culture, of strength, wealth and service. Her unity at present is represented by the educated classes; by her economic unity; by the Congress and other organisations which have woven a fabric of national unity; by the impulse to preserve her integrity and attain freedom. And as a man struggles towards Truth, she also has to struggle towards it; to overcome centrifugal forces; to control waste; to eliminate weaknesses. And the one weakness which she has to conquer is untruth, the habit of keeping aspiration and its expression divorced from harmonious action.

XXVIII

Surrender To God

WHEN the *Gita* enjoins resistance as an essential of the growth of personality in a man or a group, emphasis is laid on 'Dedication of all actions to Me.'

This Dedication,—*Ishwara pranidhana*, in other words, Surrender to God—baffled me for a long time. The intellectual background of my college days was provided by Spencer and Mill. I, therefore, could not understand why Vyas and Patanjali, Christ, St. Augustine and Caitanya, Narsimha and Mira, all persons of the highest intellect and honesty, of most powerful personality, laid emphasis on this surrender as a necessary step to Becoming.

The *Gita* enjoins it again and again:

To Him do thou surrender with thy whole being.
His grace shall then bear thee safe, Oh Bharata;
Across to Peace, supreme and changeless.

Give up all duties:
Surrender thyself unto Me.
Grieve not; for, from all bonds of sin
I'll set thee free;

How was it that this message has soothed aching hearts through centuries?

I understand this surrender a little now, but it is not easy to achieve this "surrender" as it is to understand it. Many *bhaktas* have spent their whole lives in vain by trying to realise it. It is the most difficult and yet the most exquisite of the ways which lead to the growth of a great personality. Without it, God—Perfection—never dwells in us. Without it, Becoming remains unreal, for there is nothing to reach forward to.

To the modern unbelieving mind, which has no patience with things religious, this may be difficult, if not impossible, to grasp. But personality cannot grow in stark isolation. Nothing develops personality as the influence of another personality, maybe of a father, a teacher, a friend, or a beloved. Stronger this personality, greater is its potency.

Certain persons draw us out. In their presence, we grow better and bigger. One word from them, and we acquire the strength we never had before. If such a one were with us day and night

or dwelt with us in our imagination, his inspiration would never fail us. We would then grow from strength to strength. This indwelling of a great personality becomes a powerful force, making us more and more of "ourselves".

When we are near a great personality we not only hear him speak of men and things but also note those chance remarks which let us into its secrets. We are then possessed by it. It haunts us when we leave him. Our word and deed unconsciously come to be tested on the touchstone of his personality. We are influenced, not so much by what he says, but by what he is.

We are all familiar with the conscious indwelling of our favourite author. Dumas and Hugo were my favourite authors when I was young. I read and re-read their works. Their characters were more to me than my friends and relatives. I unconsciously adopted their attitudes and verbal tricks. I grew through these masters indwelling in me. If the one abiding in us is living, the influence is still more remarkable. Who has not been shaped and moulded by the beloved's indwelling in one's heart?

Literary creativeness is not possible without the characters indwelling in an author, though temporarily. The stories of Puranic Rshis

strongly influenced me in my boyhood. Some of the characters in my novels and dramas like Kautilya, Ushanas, Aurva, Agastya and Viswamitra, are only faint, crude portraits of those who at the time when they were drawn were living realities to me.

Apart from literary creations, Vyas, for instance, has had a curious attraction for me. The *Mahabharata* is his work; the *Gita* is his gospel. He is Vishnu; and Vishnu is He, according to a well-known hymn. He is "Brahma, but without four faces; Vishnu but with two hands; Sambhu, but without the third eye." I have always come to regard him as the first among men, who by his conquest of self, his vision of the eternal in life, his literary production, laid the foundation of an immortal culture, which, though characteristically Indian, embraces humanity for all time.

The continuity of India's culture and tradition, —the main source of its strength—is due to the spirit of Vyas, enshrined in the *Mahabharata*, having indwelt Indians for centuries. For countless generations its heroes have lived in men's imagination; its approach to life has been the approach of millions; its idioms, sentiments and ideals have refreshed and invigorated them. If India is worth living and dying for, it is because

of the beauty and power which India has acquired by centuries of its surrender to Vyas.

But his attraction for me has been fitful, intellectual, not spiritual. I think of him often. More than once his momentary 'indwelling' has led me to decisions of far-reaching consequence. But in the ordinary affairs of life, I am just my erring self. He does not abide in me; nor I in him. I would be a true Indian only if this happened.

The place of 'indwelling' in the scheme of life must be realized.

The growth of personality—both of individuals and groups—is the result of Creative Resistance. Resistance to be creative must be inspired by an effort of imagination to realise an idea.

Yearning is the driving force behind this effort, behind all growth. It has to be maintained at a white heat whenever the process of Becoming has to be shortened and perfected. "Yoga only comes to him who possesses *samvega*—intense yearning" says Patanjali. This indwelling of the Supreme comes by intensifying the *samvega*—yearning, which ceaselessly seeks self-surrender. Intellect, in this matter, is barren; emotion quivering with powerful effort of the imagination only can help one towards it.

A man may be ceaselessly active; he may also

accomplish results; but he may be lost all the same, for, efforts may be unaccompanied by a persistent yearning to Become. When he loses the power of experiencing this *samvega*, his condition becomes appalling. He becomes a fossil; he is self-complacent, satisfied with himself; or, a failure, a wreck. Life, for him, loses its vitality; becomes routine. He makes efforts to recover himself, but cannot. The old enthusiasms have no chance for him. His personality then fades away. He is in "impure hell."

We throw away opportunities of strengthening the faculty to Become. Life for us is either a bewildering struggle or a soulless acquiescence. We have not even the faculty Arjun had "of being filled with wonderment, bodies thrilled with awe", or the humility which drove him to fold his hands and bow his head before the grandeur which God vouchsafed him. We are denied the Grace which makes life worth living.

"Indwelling" of the Supreme comes to him who ceaselessly meditates upon him; who with high strung emotion yearns to see Him, touch Him, love Him.

The imagination, then, vividly conjures up His picture in living colours. The attention fondly dwells on His life and teachings. He ceases to

be a thought, becomes a person. When yearning gives place to prayers, tears and heartache, He is no longer a Person to be worshipped externally but a Presence seen, felt, in oneself. The devotee then becomes 'My-minded' and 'My-souled'. His personality merges in His; attains 'My-hood'. The limitations of the aspirant's personality then fade off. He casts forth desires woven into his mind.

> With self alone content in self, he becomes
> A *Sthitaprajna*.
> Undistressed amidst sorrows,
> Amidst pleasures desire-free, he lives;
> All attachment, fear and anger past, he is a Muni,
> Of mind firmly poised
> With heart unattached in luck whether fair or foul,
> He neither rejoices nor hates, his mind abiding
> In perfect poise.

Through intellect, I now know, God cannot be known, much less realised. God abides in the man who not only reads his gospel, but reads and repeats it till his attitude towards life is imperceptibly shaped through it. Western education taught me that if I read and understand a book, I need do no more. It is a convenient formula

of the age, created by the printing press with its miles of transient literature turned out day after day, baffling men's minds, drowning their personality.

Swadhyaya—one's own study—is different. It is the repeated reading or reciting of a great book as a gospel till phrases and paragraphs come to be woven into the texture of a man's mind, stirring thoughts, stimulating aspirations, till a great personality comes to live in him.

We are of the earth, earthy. Our life is spent in a life-long struggle for money and position. And yet as we recite *Gita* day by day, some of the sayings of the Master stand out in the mind and we recognise their power. If the whole of the teaching possessed our mind, God would come and dwell in us. 'They abide in Me; I abide in them' is not a metaphor. *Yogis* and *Bhaktas* of India, the mystics of all ages and climes, were possessed by God in the same way. They had no choice; they obeyed Him; they lived but to be His instruments.

Listen to my final word, the secret of all secrets.
I speak to thee of what is for thy good, for,
I love thee steadfastly.
Let thy mind be filled with Me.

Give thy love to Me, even your offerings and
 your homage;
Then wilt thou come to Me.
That's My troth, I pledge thee here.
For thou art dear to Me.

This is no verbal consolation. It is a fact capable of actual experience. And the fortunate one who has had it, will grow in personality till its dimensions coincide with the Divine.

This is Surrender unto God—*Iswara Pranidhana*; the final message of the Gita. Not of *Gita* alone, but of all religions. "Not I, but Christ liveth in me" was the admission of Christian saints. "Doubtless thou shalt live in Me" says Krishna.

For many, God is too far away, too intangible, to be brought to indwell them. For them, as Patanjali points out, the path of Becoming can equally be trodden by constant efforts to surrender themselves to great personalities, real or imaginary, who have been known to have transcended attachment and its brood, fear and anger; to men like Vyas, Buddha, Christ, whom we revere as prophets.

XXIX

The Spirit Of Silence And Solitude

AMONG the qualities which lead to Becoming, the *Gita* gives a prominent place to Silence and Solitude. It is the *Vivikta Sevi*—the man who serves Solitude, and *Mouni*—the Silent, who attain Becoming.

Expression is bound up with personality. The man who speaks comes into contact with the world, influences it, dominates it. He grows as he expresses; and as he grows he becomes a power.

The struggle for expression, as the famous instance of Demosthenes proves, is long and arduous. On some rare occasions one can wrest admiration by powers of expression. He may carry the passions of men with him sometimes. But the most perfect eloquence has no power to touch hearts unless the whole personality is behind it; unless Silence, Solitude and Prayer teach one the secret of surrender, making the expression larger

than the speaker. Carlyle was not wrong when he said: 'Were this an altar-building time, altars might still be raised to silence and secrecy.'

'Silence' he again stated, 'is the element in which great things fashion themselves that at length they may emerge full-formed and majestic into the daylight which thenceforth they are to rule.'

Real action is in silent moments. The epochs of our life are not in the visible facts of existence like calling, marriage, acquisition of office, but in a silent thought by the wayside, in a lonely thought which reshapes our entire outlook on life with freshness, as never in society.

If one is a man of God, surrender will come to him easy, and he will be able to live in God, easily, effortlessly. His communion with Him will be filled with a placid ethereal wildness, which will fertilise his personality. When he returns, he will have been well-armed to resist the bondage or worldly contact.

Solitude is the twin brother of Silence. It is the greatest stimulant to the growth of personality, if it does not lead to vegetation.

Rshis grew in personality in forests and mountain tops. Buddha meditated alone under the Bodhi tree. Moses, Christ and Mahomed com-

muned with God on the heights of hills. Aurobindo Ghose lives in perpetual solitude. Gandhiji creates solitude in a distant village. Saint Bernard cried: *Oh Solitude, sola beatitude.* Even Hitler repeatedly resorts to solitude to replenish the depleted store house of his personality.

It is a mistake to think that we can only grow in society. I thought so once; I have found by experience that I was wrong. Frequent resort to solitude is necessary, particularly when one feels tired, wounded, deprived of inspiration.

The modern believes and maintains that society is the be-all and end-all of life. This is false. One may be human enough to want society, but he must not be so sub-human as to want it all the time. The world of perpetual change, defeat, conflict and imperfection is never enough for a man of intelligence. '*Aratirjanasamsadi*—aversion to crowds—is not a negative quality, but a positive one. Solitude is never solitary even for the man who does not want to be himself.

Solitude is essential to give us the confidence which society denies us. Confidence creates the atmosphere in which yearning—but not the greed of the covetous becomes keener. But it must be the unalterable confidence of the man who is convinced that a Higher Power shapes his destiny;

of the man who has brushed aside all other duties, and sought shelter in Him. For has He not declared to him: "I shall set thee free from all bonds of sin; Grieve not?"

Without such confidence none can hope to inspire others. Without it, all other qualities are ineffective. Without it, nothing great can be accomplished. With it only we come to the stage of no longer living according to our own plans, but seeing before us the eternal purpose of God. Solitude thus deepens the personality of everyone who, in humility, yearns for Becoming and seeks it.

To the man struggling to Become, the world of solitude is peopled with the wonderful beauty and greatness of his own yearning. Then *Samvega* comes to him in great waves, washing away the imperfections which thwart his growth; healing the scars which the moral failure of society has inflicted. If he has a *Swadhyaya*—his favourite study—its truths will surround him with their creative vigour. He will be able to live. Becoming, then, will not look like a luminous height of snows, but a Reality.

By silence and solitude is not meant the time spent with book or pen; it means the quiet moment when, in harmony with ourselves and God,

we try to receive the message of Becoming. Such silent uplifting moments, I experienced on mountain tops.

As I sat gazing at the eternal snows of the Trishul, Nandadevi and Dhavalgiri at Kosani in the Himalayas, as a wide sweep of peaks, hills and valleys lay stretched at my feet, I grew large with the greatness of the Himalayas which enwrapped me; and realised, for a stray brief moment what it means to be above and beyond attachment, fear and anger, to be *nistraigunya.* My eyes fastened on the overhanging majesty of the Trishul, I listened to a far off mighty voice in the midst of the silence around me. I settled myself tuned to it. I was passive. I let the spirit of the Himalayas fill me. One earthly thought after another left me. I was resting on the bosom of a changeless immensity. And in that silence I felt the Presence of

> The Infinite, The Lord of gods,
> Of the World's final resting place,
> Him who is beyond what is
> And what is not, Transcendent!

Do not cowards make a *Swadharma* of their fright? My *Swadharma* lies far, far below—in heat, in disappointments, in struggles. The world is too much with me.

Perhaps, duty is calling me back. Perhaps, this call is God's, for, who knows, the raptures, which such feelings give me, are not denied to the *Sadhu* who shivers in cold amidst snow and pines, unwashed and unprovided? He has attained in this vast solitude perhaps the elemental quiet of a protoplasm which knows no *Samvega* and has no personality left. Perhaps, to him the Trishul and Nandadevi are not sources of inspiration, but familiar spectres of a long and devastating winter.

For me, for the moment, is my own worldly task. Has not the *Gita* given me the solace?

> Better one's thankless task, far,
> Than an alien's duty, tho' well-performed.
> Who acts as his own nature bids
> Incurs thereby no taint of sin.
> One's innate duty, though tainted.
> Let no man desert;
> For, all efforts are wrapped in imperfection
> Like fire by smoke.

If I could but catch this mood, isolate it, weave it in myself, I could wrest the spirit of silence and solitude from the Himalayas.

In such solitude, I felt like the eagle, spontaneous, fearless, intoxicated with power which knew

no guilt, which left no shadow of misery. Sometimes I sang in tune with the voices of the morning heralding the dawn of day.

I then but sought life but not remembered it. I felt like living always for 'the mad sake of living' on some distant hill top, surrounded by majestic snows. I will have then attained the end, which a life's labours have nursed. Living will then be something ultimate—and in itself—like beautiful poetry, like a perfect statue, like Ananda, like a beautiful flower offered before a shrine. If I could only forget things and live in thought, if this narrow wisdom of the worldly were not mine, if I were not a slave—a coward!

Again, at such moments, I have felt the summons to action. I am an heir to the Aryan culture. It is for the present but a dream of forty crores of slaves. I have no power to express what I felt about it, how as a supreme effort of the human mind, it stands above all contemporary struggles as the only source of human pride, as the only hope of man. I am tied to the earth with fetters of delusion and cannot live or die for it. I cannot communicate to my helpless countrymen what they are and what they have been. If I told them, they will not hearken to me. Much less can I liberate them from slavery; weld them

into a great people; help them find their soul, which they call *Dharma* but know it not.

I am but an ordinary man to whom is denied the inspiration of Silence and Solitude in daily life.

Dust I am and unto dust I must return.

APPENDIX

A

Gandhi-Munshi Correspondence

Mr. Munshi's Resignation

Sri K. M. Munshi's letter to Gandhiji is as follows :—

NAINITAL, May 26, 1941.

"My dear Bapu,

Please excuse the language, but as my thoughts have, in this instance, taken shape in English they had best be expressed through that medium. I am seriously perturbed since yesterday morning when I read your letter to Shri Bhogilal Lala in the morning papers. I will quote two material paras :

(1) Those (Congressmen) who favour violent resistance (by way of self-defence) must get out of the Congress and shape their conduct just as they think fit and guide the others accordingly.

(2) A Congressman may not directly or indirectly associate himself with gym-

nasiums where training in violent resistance is given.

Forgive me if I cannot reconcile myself to these injunctions. Since Pakistan has been in action at Dacca, Ahmedabad, Bombay and other places, it is clear that such riots are going to be a normal feature of our life for some years. If war comes to India's frontiers or the British machinery of maintaining order weakens, they will perhaps grow more frequent and intense if a division of India is sought to be enforced by internal or external agencies through organised violence. If life, home and shrine and honour of women are threatened by *goondaism*, organised resistance in self-defence appears to me to be a paramount and inalienable duty, whatever form such resistance may take. Do you include 'akhadas' in the gymnasiums where training in violent resistance is given? I may inform you that for the last over fifteen years I have been associated with the 'akhada' movement in the presidency both directly and indirectly. I presided over two conferences, one at Bombay and the other at Poona, to organise it on a systematic line. I have still unofficial connection with several 'akhadas'. I deem them an essential machinery for training our race in the art of self-defence. During the

last many years they have played a great part in giving to us some self-confidence to resist *goondaism.* In spite of the great efforts which I have made since yesterday, I have failed to convince myself that my views as expressed in an article I wrote a fortnight ago and published in the *Social Welfare* of the 22nd, require a revision. I am sending you a copy of the article for ready reference.

Since I came to you in 1930, you have been to me more than a political leader. You have been to the whole of our family a father. You have been a beacon for the last ten years lighting me on the path of the little spirituality that I can lay claim to. Hence the pain I feel in confessing that I have searched in vain for a way out of this conflict. I can, of course, keep quiet or can acquiesce in what you say or can, for fear of losing my Congress association and your confidence, both precious possessions of my life, voice your sentiments and go my way or do nothing. But something in me rebels against such a course. You have been to me the embodiment of truth and I would lose my self-respect, my right to pray to God if I pretend to follow you with such mental reservations. I cannot pledge myself not to preach, help, organise or

sympathise with organised resistance to violence in self-defence by all possible means. I do not want to be dishonest to myself nor to the country whose integrity is now threatened nor do I desire to deny myself your inspiration and guidance in this dilemma. Please let me know what I should do.

My wife is leaving Nainital on the 28th and has already written to you. I am leaving again for Kosani. I will start from here on June 9 and will be in Bombay on the 11th. Will the 12th or the 13th suit you to see me at Sevagram? My eyes are still troubling me. Except for them I am quite fit. My wife joins me in sending you our profound respect. Yours, K. M. Munshi."

GANDHIJI'S REPLY.

Gandhiji wrote in reply :—

SEVAGRAM, May 29.

"My dear Munshi,—I have your transparent letter. I don't mind your having written it in English. I would not for a moment tolerate your suppressing your thoughts or simply parroting my views. It would not behove either of us. You have the fullest liberty of thought and expression. If there is an error, there is nothing to prevent us from correcting it but do remember

that non-violent resistance is far superior to violent resistance. And if that is so, how can a votary of non-violence resort to violence? I have already made it absolutely clear that violent resistance becomes the duty of those who have no faith in non-violence.

But I would ask you not to worry about these things while you are there. Go to Kosani and soothe your eyes with a darshan of the Dhavalgiri's snows. Do stay there longer if you must for the sake of your eyes. There is no hurry at all. This work will be there awaiting you, no matter when you return after full recovery. Do come on your return to Bombay, Bapu's blessings.

GANDHIJI'S STATEMENT

Mahatma Gandhi issued the following statement :—

"Shri. K. M. Munshi wrote to me the enclosed from Nainital to which I sent a reply in Gujarati of which the original and translation are herewith enclosed.. In pursuance of the correspondence, Shri. K. M. Munshi came to me as soon as it was possible after his return to Bombay. In the course of discussion, I discovered that whilst he accepted in abstract the principle of Ahimsa with all its implications he felt the greatest difficulty in acting upto it, the more so as with his

intimate knowledge of Bombay he was sure that he could not carry the Hindus with him, much less the Muslims and others. He knew that numerous Hindus who were under his influence would look to him for guidance and would seek his advice. He saw no way of convincing them that they could defend themselves through Ahimsa as a political weapon, and therefore of immediate use, in the midst of the riots which looked more like a miniature civil war. He could not make any effective use of *Ahimsa*. With him the question was not one of interpretation of the Congress resolutions but of being truthful to himself and to the country. In view, therefore, of the following resolution passed at Poona by the A.I.C.C. explaining the Wardha statement, I advised him that the only dignified and brave course for him was to resign from the Congress and attain freedom of action unhampered by the restrictions entailed by the Congress non-violence :

> "The A.I.C.C. has considered the statement issued by the Working Committee from Wardha on June 21, 1940 and confirms it. The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that, as explained therein, while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence, in the struggle for independence, it is unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that that principle

should be extended to free India's national defence.

"The A.I.C.C. desire to affirm that the Congress organisation should continue to be conducted on the principle of non-violence and all Congress volunteers are bound by their pledge to remain non-violent in the discharge of their duty and no Congress volunteer organisation can be formed except on that basis. Any volunteer organisation for the purpose of self-defence, with which Congressmen are associated, must likewise adhere to non-violence."

I told him that there came a time in every Congressman's life when being a Congressman dragged him down. That was when there was conflict between thought and action; for the spring of non-violent action was non-violent thought. If the latter was absent, the former had subjectively little or no value. Therefore, it was good for him, the Congress and the country that he should resign and mould his action from moment to moment as he thought proper. And by this action, he would open the door for those Congressmen to resign whose practice could not accord with their thought.

The Congress was conceived to be a non-violent and truthful organisation in which there should be no place for those who could not honestly conform to these two conditions. Strange as it might appear the practice of non-violence seemed

more difficult than of truth, for the fruits of untruth were more indetectable than those of violence. My advice appealed to Shri Munshi and he has decided to accept it. He will go because he could not be disloyal to the Congress he has so long served and it does not at all follow that his resignation means that, from being a meek and mild man, he suddenly becomes a fierce man, vowing vengeance on those whom he may consider to be opponents or that he becomes a communal anti-nationalist. I have no doubt that for him every non-Hindu whose only home is India is as much an Indian as a Hindu born and bred in India. I congratulate him upon taking the step and I have every hope that his resignation from the Congress will enable him to utilise his faculties so as to make a decisive contribution towards the establishment of lasting peace in Bombay.

MR. MUNSHI'S STATEMENT

The following is the statement of Shri K. M. Munshi:

"I had the benefit of a detailed discussion with Gandhiji and many friends on the present situation in the country. After mature deliberation I feel that the interests of the country demand that, with my views on the question of self-defence, I should not continue any longer

to be a member of the Congress. Any other course would neither be honourable on my part nor fair to the country or the Congress. Gandhiji would not think of my offering satyagraha in the present uncertain and enfeebled condition of my health. I could not think of working on a peace brigade in Bombay not having the requisite spiritual strength. At the same time to pursue any work other than that of helping to arrest the progress of blood feud that is going on before one's eyes is flying away from duty. I feel that in the dark days which lie ahead of India I would be of no use to the country unless I pursued the path of duty in the light which God has been pleased to vouchsafe to me.

This decision has been rendered rather difficult by the personal bond which subsists between Gandhiji and several leading Congressmen on the one hand, and myself, but I would not be worthy of their confidence, if I remained in the Congress with a mental reservation on the actual point of Congress faith. As Gandhiji understands it, my only satisfaction has been that Gandhiji with his usual generosity has helped me to reach a decision which is consistent with my own view as to the direction in which my immediate duty lies."

B

Akhand Hindustan Front

SEVERAL Congressmen, while expressing the same views as I hold on the right of self defence, have been making enquiries of me whether they should leave the Congress. That is not for me to say or to decide. Gandhiji in his statement on my resignation has plainly told every Congressman what his duty is. Resignation on the issue of self-defence can only be a matter of conscience and the best way for Congressmen is to seek the guidance of Gandhiji.

Several Congressmen have written to me suggesting the revival of the Swaraj Party in order that they can join it once they leave the Congress. The Swaraj Party when there is no parliamentary life likely is hardly possible. Any organisation cannot be thought of unless a sufficient number of influential Congressmen who have resigned from the Congress are found anxious to keep in touch with each other for carrying on corporate activity.

I am only concerned with the problem of the immediate present. Hitler's march into Russia, the appointment of General Wavell to the Indian command and the continuance of communal riots in the country are unmistakable pointers to the gravity of the situation in which India finds herself. I feel strongly that unless the country as a whole takes immediate steps to put the house in order it may find itself in the gravest danger. At such a time it is essential that all those who believe in the unity and internal security of undivided India (*Akhand* Hindustan) must mobilise and consolidate opinion against the loose talk of dividing India. Several leaders of all communities have already expressed themselves against this attempt to vivisect India. The Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Bombay Conference, the Azad Conference, the Conference of the Momins, the All-Bengal Krishak Proja Samiti, the South Indian Anti-Separation Conference, the Sikhs and the Christians have all unequivocally declared for Akhand Hindustan, and unless all these elements who form the bulk of the public opinion in the country close up their ranks, it is difficult to see how we can tide over the uncertainties which are likely to arise in the hour of international crisis.

The hundred and fifty years of hypnotism which the so-called Pax Britannica had worked on us renders it difficult for us to remember that this is not a time to forge new constitutions. There is no possibility at present of adjusting communal rights for no one can foresee the basis of future life. The world including India and its political parties is in a melting pot. No one knows the shape they will take when this terrible war ends. Akhand Hindustan is the undivided India of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Europeans and Parsis: of everyone who is born in India or who has his home in India. At the end of the war we all hope to live here as brothers in full freedom to pursue our distinctive growth. At present, therefore, we can only explore the possibility of establishing an 'Akhand Hindustan Front', the lowest common measure of agreement among the largest sections of public opinion in India. If we secure the Front it will give us some chance of securing internal amity and security during the coming year or two and thus to preserve our land, our homes and our culture.

Unfortunately, we have in Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, a gentleman who is anything but helpful. He is not likely to withdraw the veto with which he has invested those

who seek the division of this country. His constant emphasis on agreement between political parties before any political advance is made is a flat refusal on the part of White Hall to help us to solve our problems. Unless this veto is, therefore, taken away and Britain declines to put a premium on communal intransigence, it would be idle to expect that Britain will help us in this matter. But that is no reason why an effort should not be made by us to see the dangers ahead and help ourselves.

The Front need not be an organisation. It is only a common platform evolved by different parties which believe in the internal security and inviolability of India and which combine to provide a solution which will eliminate communal strife from this country and preserve the internal economy during the period of international crisis. I have put myself in communication with several friends and if sufficient response is forthcoming it would not be difficult to achieve some measure of success in this direction.